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ARIADNE FLORENTINA.

SIX LECTURES

ON

WOOD AND METAL ENGRAVING.

WITH APPENDIX.

GIVEN BEFORE THE UNIVERSITY OF OXFORD,
IN MICHAELMAS TERM, 1872.

BY

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CONTENTS.

LECTURE I.

PAGE

DEFINITION OF THE ART OF ENGRAVING.....	1
---	---

LECTURE II.

THE RELATION OF ENGRAVING TO OTHER ARTS IN FLORENCE..	30
---	----

LECTURE III.

THE TECHNIQS OF WOOD ENGRAVING.....	59
-------------------------------------	----

LECTURE IV.

THE TECHNIQS OF METAL ENGRAVING.....	85
--------------------------------------	----

LECTURE V.

DESIGN IN THE GERMAN SCHOOLS OF ENGRAVING (HOLBEIN AND DURER.).....	119
--	-----

LECTURE VI.

	PAGE
DESIGN IN THE FLORENTINE SCHOOLS OF ENGRAVING ('SANDRO BOTTICELLI).....	150

 APPENDIX.

ARTICLE I.

NOTES ON THE PRESENT STATE OF ENGRAVING IN ENGLAND.,	201
--	-----

ARTICLE II.

DETACHED NOTES.....	218
---------------------	-----

ARIADNE FLORENTINA.

SIX LECTURES

ON

WOOD AND METAL ENGRAVING.

LECTURE I.

DEFINITION OF THE ART OF ENGRAVING.

1. THE entrance on my duty for to-day begins the fourth year of my official work in Oxford; and I doubt not that some of my audience are asking themselves, very doubtfully—at all events, I ask myself, very anxiously—what has been done.

For practical result, I have not much to show. I announced, a fortnight since, that I would meet, the day before yesterday, any gentleman who wished to attend this course for purposes of study. My class, so minded, numbers four, of whom three wish to be artists, and ought not therefore, by rights, to be at Oxford at all; and the fourth is the last remaining unit of the class I had last year.

2. Yet I neither in this reproach myself, nor, if I could,

would I reproach the students who are not here. I do not reproach myself; for it was impossible for me to attend properly to the schools and to write the grammar for them at the same time; and I do not blame the absent students for not attending a school from which I have generally been absent myself. In all this, there is much to be mended, but, in true light, nothing to be regretted.

I say, I had to write my school grammar. These three volumes of lectures under my hand,* contain, carefully set down, the things I want you first to know. None of my writings are done fluently; the second volume of *Modern Painters* was all of it written twice—most of it, four times,—over; and these lectures have been written, I don't know how many times. You may think that this was done merely in an author's vanity, not in a tutor's care. To the vanity I plead guilty,—no man is more intensely vain than I am; but my vanity is set on having it *known* of me that I am a good master, not in having it *said* of me that I am a smooth author. My vanity is never more wounded than in being called a fine writer, meaning—that nobody need mind what I say.

3. Well, then, besides this vanity, I have some solicitude for your progress. You may give me credit for it or not, as you choose, but it is sincere. And that your advance may be safe, I have taken the best pains I could in laying down laws for it. In these three years I have got my gram-

* Inaugural series, *Aratra Pentelici*, and *Eagle's Nest*.

mar written, and, with the help of many friends, all working instruments in good order; and now we will try what we can do. Not that, even now, you are to depend on my presence with you in personal teaching. I shall henceforward think of the lectures less, of the schools more; but my best work for the schools will often be by drawing in Florence or in Lancashire—not here.

4. I have already told you several times that the course through which I mean every student in these schools should pass, is one which shall enable them to understand the elementary principles of the finest art. It will necessarily be severe, and seem to lead to no immediate result. Some of you will, on the contrary, wish to be taught what is immediately easy, and gives prospect of a manifest success.

But suppose they should come to the Professor of Logic and Rhetoric, and tell him they wanted to be taught to preach like Mr. Spurgeon, or the Bishop of —.

He would say to them,—I cannot, and if I could I would not, tell you how to preach like Mr. Spurgeon, or the Bishop of —. Your own character will form your style; your own zeal will direct it; your own obstinacy or ignorance may limit or exaggerate it; but my business is to prevent, as far as I can, your having *any* particular style; and to teach you the laws of all language, and the essential power of your own.

In like manner, this course, which I propose to you in art, will be calculated only to give you judgment and method in future study, to establish to your conviction the

laws of general art, and to enable you to draw, if not with genius, at least with sense and propriety.

The course, so far as it consists in practice, will be defined in my Instructions for the schools. And the theory connected with that practice is set down in the three lectures at the end of the first course I delivered—those on Line, Light, and Colour.

You will have, therefore, to get this book,* and it is the only one which you will need to have of your own,—the others are placed, for reference, where they will be accessible to you.

5. In the 139th paragraph, p. 132, it states the order of your practical study in these terms :

“I wish you to begin by getting command of line;—that is to say, by learning to draw a steady line, limiting with absolute correctness the form or space you intend it to limit; to proceed by getting command over flat tints, so that you may be able to fill the spaces you have enclosed evenly, either with shade or colour, according to the school you adopt; and, finally, to obtain the power of adding such fineness of drawing, within the masses, as shall express their undulation, and their characters of form and texture.”

And now, since in your course of practice you are first required to attain the power of drawing lines accurately and delicately, so in the course of theory, or grammar, I

* My inaugural series of seven lectures, published at the Clarendon Press.

wish you first to learn the principles of linear design, exemplified by the schools which at the top of page 130 you will find characterized as the Schools of Line.

6. If I had command of as much time as I should like to spend with you on this subject, I would begin with the early forms of art which used the simplest linear elements of design. But, for general service and interest, it will be better that I should sketch what has been accomplished by the greatest masters in that manner; the rather that their work is more or less accessible to all, and has developed into the vast industries of modern engraving, one of the most powerful existing influences of education and sources of pleasure among civilized people.

And this investigation, so far from interrupting, will facilitate our examination of the history of the nobler arts. You will see in the preface to my lectures on Greek sculpture that I intend them to be followed by a course on architecture, and that by one on Florentine sculpture. But the art of engraving is so manifestly, at Florence, though not less essentially elsewhere, a basis of style both in architecture and sculpture, that it is absolutely necessary I should explain to you in what the skill of the engraver consists, before I can define with accuracy that of more admired artists. For engraving, though not altogether in the method of which you see examples in the print-shops of the High Street, is, indeed, a prior art to that either of building or sculpture, and is an inseparable part of both, when they are rightly practised.

7. And while we thus examine the scope of this first of the arts, it will be necessary that we learn also the scope of mind of the early practisers of it, and accordingly acquaint ourselves with the main events in the biography of the schools of Florence. To understand the temper and meaning of one great master is to lay the best, if not the only, foundation for the understanding of all; and I shall therefore make it the leading aim of this course of lectures to remind you of what is known, and direct you to what is knowable, of the life and character of the greatest Florentine master of engraving, Sandro Botticelli; and, incidentally, to give you some idea of the power of the greatest master of the German, or any northern, school, Hans Holbein.

8. You must feel, however, that I am using the word "engraving" in a somewhat different, and, you may imagine, a wider, sense, than that which you are accustomed to attach to it. So far from being a wider sense, it is in reality a more accurate and restricted one, while yet it embraces every conceivable right application of the art. And I wish, in this first lecture, to make entirely clear to you the proper meaning of the word, and proper range of the art of, engraving; in my next following lecture, to show you its place in Italian schools, and then, in due order, the place it ought to take in our own, and in all schools.

9. First then, to-day, of the *Differentia*, or essential quality of Engraving, as distinguished from other arts.

What answer would you make to me, if I asked casually what engraving was? Perhaps the readiest which would occur to you would be, "The translation of pictures into black and white by means admitting reduplication of impressions." But if that be done by lithography, we do not call it engraving,—whereas we speak contentedly and continually of seal engraving, in which there is no question of black and white. And, as scholars, you know that this customary mode of speaking is quite accurate; and that engraving means, primarily, making a permanent cut or furrow in something. The central syllable of the word has become a sorrowful one, meaning the most permanent of furrows

10. But are you prepared absolutely to accept this limitation with respect to engraving as a pictorial art? Will you call nothing an engraving, except a group of furrows or cavities cut in a hard substance? What shall we say of mezzotint engraving, for instance, in which, though indeed furrows and cavities are produced mechanically as a ground, the artist's work is in effacing them? And when we consider the power of engraving in representing pictures and multiplying them, are we to recognize and admire no effects of light and shade except those which are visibly produced by dots or furrows? I mean, will the virtue of an engraving be in exhibiting these imperfect means of its effect, or in concealing them?

11. Here, for instance, is the head of a soldier by Durer,—a mere gridiron of black lines. Would this be

better or worse engraving if it were more like a photograph or lithograph, and no lines seen?—suppose, more like the head of Mr. Santley, now in all the music-shops, and really quite deceptive in light and shade, when seen from over the way? Do you think Durer's work would be better if it were more like that? And would you have me, therefore, leaving the question of technical method of production altogether to the craftsman, consider pictorial engraving simply as the production of a light-and-shade drawing, by some method permitting its multiplication for the public?

12. This, you observe, is a very practical question indeed. For instance, the illustrations of my own lectures on sculpture are equivalent to permanent photographs. There can be little doubt that means will be discovered of thus producing perfect facsimiles of artists' drawings; so that, if no more than facsimile be required, the old art of cutting furrows in metal may be considered as, at this day, virtually ended. And, indeed, it is said that line engravers cannot any more get apprentices, and that a pure steel or copper plate is not likely to be again produced, when once the old living masters of the bright field shall have been all laid in their earth-furrows.

13. Suppose, then, that this come to pass; and more than this, suppose that wood engraving also be superseded, and that instead of imperfect transcripts of drawings, on wood-blocks or metal-plates, photography enabled us to give, quite cheaply, and without limit to number

facsimiles of the finished light-and-shade drawings of artists themselves. Another group of questions instantly offers itself, on these new conditions; namely, What are the best means for a light-and-shade drawing—the pen, or the pencil, the charcoal, or the flat wash? That is to say, the pen, producing shade by black lines, as old engraving did; the pencil, producing shade by grey lines, variable in force; the charcoal, producing a smoky shadow with no lines in it, or the washed tint, producing a transparent shadow with no lines in it. Which of these methods is the best?—or have they, each and all, virtues to be separately studied, and distinctively applied?

14. See how curiously the questions multiply on us. 1st, Is engraving to be only considered as cut work? 2nd, For present designs multipliable without cutting, by the sunshine, what methods or instruments of drawing will be best? And now, 3rdly, before we can discuss these questions at all, is there not another lying at the root of both,—namely, what a light-and-shade drawing itself properly *is*, and how it differs, or should differ, from a painting,—whether by mere deficiency, or by some entirely distinct merit?

15. For instance, you know how confidently it is said, in common talk about Turner, that his works are intelligible and beautiful when engraved, though incomprehensible as paintings. Admitting this to be so, do you suppose it is because the translation into light and shade is deficient in some qualities which the painting had, or that

it possesses some quality which the painting had not! Does it please more because it is deficient in the colour which confused a feeble spectator, and offended a dogmatic one,—or because it possesses a decision in its steady linear labour which interprets, or corrects, the swift pencilling of the artist?

16. Do you notice the two words I have just used, *Decision*, and *Linear*?—*Decision*, again introducing the idea of cuts or divisions, as opposed to gradations; *Linear*, as opposed to massive or broad?

Yet we use all these words at different times in praise, while they evidently mark inconsistent qualities. Softness and decision, breadth and delineation, cannot co-exist in equal degrees. There must surely therefore be a virtue in the engraving inconsistent with that of the painting, and vice versâ.

Now, be clear about these three questions which we have to-day to answer.

A. Is all engraving to be cut work?

B. If it need not be cut work, but only the reproduction of a drawing, what methods of executing a light-and-shade drawing will be best?

C. Is the shaded drawing itself to be considered only as a deficient or imperfect painting, or as a different thing from a painting, having a virtue of its own, belonging to black and white, as opposed to colour?

17. I will give you the answers at once, briefly, and amplify them afterwards.

- A. All engraving must be cut work;—*that* is its difference. Unless your effect be produced by cutting into some solid substance, it is not engraving at all.
- B. The proper methods for light-and-shade drawing vary according to subject, and the degree of completeness desired,—some of them having much in common with engraving, and others with painting.
- C The qualities of a light-and-shade drawing ought to be entirely different from those of a painting. It is not a deficient or partial representation of a coloured scene or picture, but an entirely different reading of either. So that much of what is intelligible in a painting ought to be unintelligible in a light-and-shade study, and vice versâ.

You have thus three arts,—engraving, light-and-shade drawing, and painting.

Now I am not going to lecture, in this course, on painting, nor on light-and-shade drawing, but on engraving only. But I must tell you something about light-and-shade drawing first; or, at least, remind you of what I have before told.

18. You see that the three elementary lectures in my first volume are on Line, Light, and Colour,—that is to say, on the modes of art which produce linear designs,—which produce effects of light,—and which produce effects of colour.

I must, for the sake of new students, briefly repeat the explanation of these.

Here is an Arabian vase, in which the pleasure given to the eye is only by lines;—no effect of light, or of colour, is attempted. Here is a moonlight by Turner, in which there are no lines at all, and no colours at all. The pleasure given to the eye is only by modes of light and shade, or effects of light. Finally, here is an early Florentine painting, in which there are no lines of importance, and no effect of light whatever; but all the pleasure given to the eye is in gaiety and variety of colour.

19. I say, the pleasure given to the *eye*. The lines on this vase write something; but the ornamentation produced by the beautiful writing is independent of its meaning. So the moonlight is pleasant, first, as light; and the figures, first, as colour. It is not the shape of the waves, but the light on them; not the expression of the figures, but their colour, by which the *ocular* pleasure is to be given.

These three examples are violently marked ones; but, in preparing to draw *any* object, you will find that, practically, you have to ask yourself, Shall I aim at the colour of it, the light of it, or the lines of it? You can't have all three; you can't even have any two out of the three in equal strength. The best art, indeed, comes so near nature as in a measure to unite all. But the best is not, and cannot be, as good as nature; and the mode of its deficiency is that it must lose some of the colour, some of the light, or some of the delineation. And in conse-

quence, there is one great school which says, We will have the colour, and as much light and delineation as are consistent with it. Another which says, We will have shade, and as much colour and delineation as are consistent with it. The third, We will have delineation, and as much colour and shade as are consistent with it.

20. And though much of the two subordinate qualities may in each school be consistent with the leading one, yet the schools are evermore separate: as, for instance, in other matters, one man says, I will have my fee, and as much honesty as is consistent with it; another, I will have my honesty, and as much fee as is consistent with it. Though the man who will have his fee be subordinately honest,—though the man who will have his honour, subordinately rich, are they not evermore of diverse schools?

So you have, in art, the utterly separate provinces, though in contact at their borders, of

The Delineators;

The Chiaroscurists; and

The Colourists.

21. The Delineators are the men on whom I am going to give you this course of lectures. They are essentially engravers, an engraved line being the best means of delineation. The Chiaroscurists are essentially draughtsmen with chalk, charcoal, or single tints. Many of them paint, but always with some effort and pain. Leonardo is the type of them; but the entire Dutch school consists

of them, laboriously painting, without essential genius for colour.

The Colourists are the true painters; and all the faultless (as far, that is to say, as men's work can be so,) and consummate masters of art belong to them.

22. The distinction between the colourist and chiaroscuro school is trenchant and absolute; and may soon be shown you so that you will never forget it. Here is a Florentine picture by one of the pupils of Giotto, of very good representative quality, and which the University galleries are rich in possessing. At the distance at which I hold it, you see nothing but a chequer-work of brilliant, and, as it happens, even glaring colours. If you come near, you will find this patchwork resolve itself into a Visitation, and Birth of St. John; but that St. Elizabeth's red dress, and the Virgin's blue and white one, and the brown posts of the door, and the blue spaces of the sky, are painted in their own entirely pure colours, each shaded with more powerful tints of itself,—pale blue with deep blue, scarlet with crimson, yellow with orange, and green with richer green.

The whole is therefore as much a mosaic work of brilliant colour as if it were made of bits of glass. There is no effect of light attempted, or so much as thought of: you don't know even where the sun is; nor have you the least notion what time of day it is. The painter thinks you cannot be so superfluous as to want to know what time of day it is.

23. Here, on the other hand, is a Dutch picture of good average quality, also out of the University galleries. It represents a group of cattle, and a herdsman watching them. And you see in an instant that the time is evening. The sun is setting, and there is warm light on the landscape, the cattle, and the standing figure.

Nor does the picture in any conspicuous way seem devoid of colour. On the contrary, the herdsman has a scarlet jacket, which comes out rather brilliantly from the mass of shade round it; and a person devoid of colour faculty, or ill taught, might imagine the picture to be really a fine work of colour.

But if you will come up close to it, you will find that the herdsman has brown sleeves, though he has a scarlet jacket; and that the shadows of both are painted with precisely the same brown, and in several places with continuous touches of the pencil. It is only in the light that the scarlet is laid on.

This at once marks the picture as belonging to the lower or chiaroscuro school, even if you had not before recognized it as such by its pretty rendering of sunset effect.

24. You might at first think it a painting which showed greater skill than that of the school of Giotto. But the skill is not the primary question. The power of imagination is the first thing to be asked about. This Italian work imagines, and requires you to imagine also, a St. Elizabeth and St. Mary, to the best of your power.

But this Dutch one only wishes you to imagine an effect of sunlight on cowskin, which is a far lower strain of the imaginative faculty.

Also, as you may see the effect of sunlight on cowskin, in reality, any summer afternoon, but cannot so frequently see a St. Elizabeth, it is a far less useful strain of the imaginative faculty.

And, generally speaking, the Dutch chiaroscurists are indeed persons without imagination at all,—who, not being able to get any pleasure out of their thoughts, try to get it out of their sensations; note, however, also their technical connection with the Greek school of shade, (see my sixth inaugural lecture, p. 158,) in which colour was refused, not for the sake of deception, but of solemnity.

25. With these final motives you are not now concerned; your present business is the quite easy one of knowing, and noticing, the universal distinction between the methods of treatment in which the aim is light, and in which it is colour; and so to keep yourselves guarded from the danger of being misled by the, often very ingenious, talk of persons who have vivid colour sensations without having learned to distinguish them from what else pleases them in pictures. There is an interesting volume by Professor Taine on the Dutch school, containing a valuable historical analysis of the influences which formed it; but full of the gravest errors, resulting from the confusion in his mind between colour and tone.

in consequence of which he imagines the Dutch painters to be colourists.

26. It is so important for you to be grounded securely in these first elements of pictorial treatment, that I will be so far tedious as to show you one more instance of the relative intellectual value of the pure colour and pure chiaro-scuro school, not in Dutch and Florentine, but in English art. Here is a copy of one of the lost frescoes of our Painted Chamber of Westminster;—fourteenth-century work, entirely conceived in colour, and calculated for decorative effect. There is no more light and shade in it than in a Queen of Hearts in a pack of cards;—all that the painter at first wants you to see is that the young lady has a white forehead, and a golden crown, and a fair neck, and a violet robe, and a crimson shield with golden leopards on it; and that behind her is clear blue sky. Then, farther, he wants you to read her name, “Debonnairete,” which, when you have read, he farther expects you to consider what it is to be debonnaire, and to remember your Chaucer’s description of the virtue:—

She was not brown, nor dun of hue,
But white as snowe, fallen new,
With eyen glad, and browes bent,
Her hair down to her heeles went,
And she was simple, as dove on tree,
Full debonnair of heart was she.

27. You see Chaucer dwells on the colour just as much

as the painter does, but the painter has also given her the English shield to bear, meaning that good-humour, or debonnaireté, cannot be maintained by self-indulgence;—only by fortitude. Farther note, with Chaucer, the “eyen glad,” and brows “bent” (high-arched and calm), the strong life (hair down to the heels,) and that her gladness is to be without subtlety,—that is to say, without the slightest pleasure in any form of advantage-taking, or any shrewd or mocking wit: “she was simple as dove on tree;” and you will find that the colour-painting, both in the fresco and in the poem, is in the very highest degree didactic and intellectual; and distinguished, as being so, from all inferior forms of art. Farther, that it requires you yourself first to understand the nature of simplicity, and to like simplicity in young ladies better than subtlety; and to understand why the second of Love’s five kind arrows (*Beauté* being the first),

Simplece ot nom, la seconde
 Qui maint homme parmi le monde
 Et mainte dame fait amer.

Nor must you leave the picture without observing that there is another reason for *Debonnairete*’s bearing the Royal shield,—of all shields that, rather than another. “*De-bonne-aire*” meant originally “out of a good eagle’s nest,” the “*aire*” signifying the eagle’s nest or eyrie especially, because it is flat, the Latin “*area*” being the root of all.

And this coming out of a good nest is recognized as, of all things, needfullest to give the strength which enables people to be good-humoured ; and thus you have "debonnaire" forming the third word of the group, with "gentle" and "kind," all first signifying "of good race."

You will gradually see, as we go on, more and more why I called my third volume of lectures *Eagle's Nest* ; for I am not fantastic in these titles, as is often said ; but try shortly to mark my chief purpose in the book by them.

28. Now for comparison with this old art, here is a modern engraving, in which colour is entirely ignored ; and light and shade alone are used to produce what is supposed to be a piece of impressive religious instruction. But it is not a piece of religious instruction at all ;—only a piece of religious sensation, prepared for the sentimental pleasure of young ladies ; whom (since I am honoured to-day by the presence of many) I will take the opportunity of warning against such forms of false theological satisfaction. This engraving represents a young lady in a very long and, though plain, very becoming white dress, tossed upon the waves of a terrifically stormy sea, by which neither her hair nor her becoming dress is in the least wetted ; and saved from despair in that situation by closely embracing a very thick and solid stone Cross. By which far-sought and original metaphor young ladies are expected, after some effort, to understand the recourse they may have, for support,

to the Cross of Christ, in the midst of the troubles of this world.

29. As those troubles are for the present, in all probability, limited to the occasional loss of their thimbles when they have not taken care to put them into their workboxes,—the concern they feel at the unsympathizing gaiety of their companions,—or perhaps the disappointment at not hearing a favourite clergyman preach,—(for I will not suppose the young ladies interested in this picture to be affected by any chagrin at the loss of an invitation to a ball, or the like worldliness,)—it seems to me the stress of such calamities might be represented, in a picture, by less appalling imagery. And I can assure my fair little lady friends,—if I still have any,—that whatever a young girl's ordinary troubles or annoyances may be, her true virtue is in shaking them off, as a rose-leaf shakes off rain, and remaining debonnaire and bright in spirits, or even, as the rose would be, the brighter for the troubles; and not at all in allowing herself to be either drifted or depressed to the point of requiring religious consolation. But if any real and deep sorrow, such as no metaphor can represent, fall upon her, does she suppose that the theological advice of this piece of modern art can be trusted? If she will take the pains to think truly, she will remember that Christ Himself never says anything about holding by His Cross. He speaks a good deal of bearing it; but never for an instant of holding by it. It is His Hand, not His Cross,

which is to save either you, or St. Peter, when the waves are rough. And the utterly reckless way in which modern religious teachers, whether in art or literature, abuse the metaphor somewhat briefly and violently leant on by St. Paul, simply prevents your understanding the meaning of any word which Christ Himself speaks on this matter! So you see this popular art of light and shade, catching you by your mere thirst of sensation, is not only undidactic, but the reverse of didactic—deceptive and illusory.

30. This *popular* art, you hear me say, scornfully; and I have told you, in some of my teaching in Aratra Pentelici, that all great art must be popular. Yes, but great art is popular, as bread and water are to children fed by a father. And vile art is popular, as poisonous jelly is, to children cheated by a confectioner. And it is quite possible to make any kind of art popular on those last terms. The colour school may become just as poisonous as the colourless, in the hands of fools, or of rogues. Here is a book I bought only the other day,—one of the things got up cheap to catch the eyes of mothers at bookstalls,—Puss in Boots, illustrated; a most definite work of the colour school—red jackets and white paws and yellow coaches as distinct as Giotto or Raphael would have kept them. But the thing is done by fools for money, and becomes entirely monstrous and abominable. Here, again, is colour art produced by fools for religion: here is Indian sacred painting,—a black god

with a hundred arms, with a green god on one side of him and a red god on the other; still a most definite work of the colour school. Giotto or Raphael could not have made the black more resolutely black, (though the whole colour of the school of Athens is kept in distinct separation from one black square in it), nor the green more unquestionably green. Yet the whole is pestilent and loathsome.

31. Now but one point more, and I have done with this subject for to-day.

You must not think that this manifest brilliancy and Harlequin's-jacket character is essential in the colour school. The essential matter is only that everything should be of *its own* definite colour: it may be altogether sober and dark, yet the distinctness of hue preserved with entire fidelity. Here, for instance, is a picture of Hogarth's,—one of quite the most precious things we have in our galleries. It represents a meeting of some learned society—gentlemen of the last century, very gravely dressed, but who, nevertheless, as gentlemen pleasantly did in that day,—you remember Goldsmith's weakness on the point—wear coats of tints of dark red, blue, or violet. There are some thirty gentlemen in the room, and perhaps seven or eight different tints of subdued claret-colour in their coats; and yet every coat is kept so distinctly of its own proper claret-colour, that each gentleman's servant would know his master's.

Yet the whole canvas is so grey and quiet, that as I

now hold it by this Dutch landscape, with the vermillion jacket, you would fancy Hogarth's had no colour in it at all, and that the Dutchman was half-way to becoming a Titian; whereas Hogarth's is a consummate piece of the most perfect colourist school, which Titian could not beat, in its way; and the Dutchman could no more paint half an inch of it than he could summon a rainbow into the clouds.

32. Here then, you see, are, altogether, five works, all of the absolutely pure colour school:—

1. One, Indian,—Religious Art;
2. One, Florentine,—Religious Art;
3. One, English, from Painted Chamber, Westminster,
—Ethic Art;
4. One, English,—Hogarth,—Naturalistic Art;
5. One, English,—to-day sold in the High Street,—
Caricaturist Art.

And of these, the Florentine and old English are divine work, God-inspired; full, indeed, of faults and innocencies, but divine, as good children are.

Then this by Hogarth is entirely wise and right; but worldly-wise, not divine.

While the old Indian, and this, with which we feed our children at this hour, are entirely damnable art;—every bit of it done by the direct inspiration of the devil,—feeble, ridiculous,—yet mortally poisonous to every noble quality in body and soul.

33. I have now, I hope, guarded you sufficiently from the danger either of confusing the inferior school of chia-

roscuro with that of colour, or of imagining that a work must necessarily be good, on the sole ground of its belonging to the higher group. I can now proceed securely to separate the third school, that of Delineation, from both; and to examine its special qualities.

It begins, (see Inaugural Lectures, § 137,) in the primitive work of races insensible alike to shade and to colour, and nearly devoid of thought and of sentiment, but gradually developing into both.

Now as the design is primitive, so are the means likely to be primitive. A line is the simplest work of art you can produce. What are the simplest means you can produce it with?

A Cumberland lead pencil is a work of art in itself, quite a nineteenth-century machine. Pen and ink are complex and scholarly; and even chalk or charcoal not always handy.

But the primitive line, the first and last, generally the best of lines, is that which you have elementary faculty of at your fingers' ends, and which kittens can draw as well as you—the scratch.

The first, I say, and the last of lines. Permanent exceedingly,—even in flesh, or on mahogany tables, often more permanent than we desire. But when studiously and honourably made, divinely permanent, or delightfully—as on the venerable desks of our public schools, most of them, now, specimens of wood engraving dear to the heart of England.

34. Engraving, then, is in brief terms, the Art of Scratch. It is essentially the cutting into a solid substance for the sake of making your ideas as permanent as possible,—graven with an iron pen in the Rock for ever. *Permanence*, you observe, is the object, not multiplicity;—that is quite an accidental, sometimes not even a desirable, attribute of engraving. Duration of your work—fame, and the undeceived vision of all men, on the pane of glass of the window on a wet day, or on the pillars of the castle of Chillon, or on the walls of the pyramids;—a primitive art,—yet first and last with us.

Since then engraving, we say, is essentially cutting into the surface of any solid; as the primitive design is in lines or dots, the primitive cutting of such design is a scratch or a hole; and scratchable solids being essentially three—stone, wood, metal,—we shall have three great schools of engraving to investigate in each material.

35. On tablet of stone, on tablet of wood, on tablet of steel,—the first giving the law to everything; the second true Athenian, like Athena's first statue in olive-wood, making the law legible and homely; and the third true Vulcanian, having the splendour and power of accomplished labour.

Now of stone engraving, which is joined inseparably with sculpture and architecture, I am not going to speak at length in this course of lectures. I shall speak only of wood and metal engraving. But there is one circumstance in stone engraving which it is necessary

to observe in connection with the other two branches of the art.

The great difficulty for a primitive engraver is to make his scratch deep enough to be visible. Visibility is quite as essential to your fame as permanence; and if you have only your furrow to depend on, the engraved tablet, at certain times of day, will be illegible, and passed without notice.

But suppose you fill in your furrow with something black, then it will be legible enough at once; and if the black fall out or wash out, still your furrow is there, and may be filled again by anybody.

Therefore, the noble stone engravers, using marble to receive their furrow, fill that furrow with marble ink.

And you have an engraved plate to purpose;—with the whole sky for its margin! Look here—the front of the church of San Michele of Lucca,—white marble with green serpentine for ink; or here,—the steps of the Giant's Stair, with lead for ink; or here,—the floor of the Pisan Duomo, with porphyry for ink. Such cutting, filled in with colour or with black, branches into all sorts of developments,—Florentine mosaic on the one hand, niello on the other, and infinite minor arts.

36. Yet we must not make this filling with colour part of our definition of engraving. To engrave is, in final strictness, “to decorate a surface with furrows.” (Cameos, in accuratest terms, are minute sculptures, not engravings.) A ploughed field is the purest type of such art; and is, on hilly land, an exquisite piece of decoration.

Therefore it will follow that engraving distinguishes itself from ordinary drawing by greater need of muscular effort.

The quality of a pen drawing is to be produced easily, —deliberately, always,* but with a point that *glides* over the paper. Engraving, on the contrary, requires always force, and its virtue is that of a line produced by pressure, or by blows of a chisel.

It involves, therefore, always, ideas of power and dexterity, but also of restraint; and the delight you take in it should involve the understanding of the difficulty the workman dealt with. You perhaps doubt the extent to which this feeling justly extends, (in the first volume of “Modern Painters,” expressed under the head “Ideas of Power.”) But why is a large stone in any building grander than a small one? Simply because it was more difficult to raise it. So, also, an engraved line is, and ought to be, recognized as more grand than a pen or pencil line, because it was more difficult to execute it.

In this mosaic of Lucca front you forgive much, and admire much, because you see it is all cut in stone. So, in wood and steel, you ought to see that every line has been costly; but observe, costly of deliberative, no less than athletic or executive power. The main use of the restraint which makes the line difficult to draw, is to give time and motive for deliberation in drawing it, and to ensure its being the best in your power.

* Compare Inaugural Lectures, § 144.

37. For, as with deliberation, so without repentance, your engraved line must be. It may, indeed, be bur-nished or beaten out again in metal, or patched and botched in stone; but always to disadvantage, and at pains which must not be incurred often. And there is a singular evidence in one of Durer's finest plates that, in his time, or at least in his manner of work, it was not possible at all. Among the disputes as to the meaning of Durer's Knight and Death, you will find it sometimes suggested, or insisted, that the horse's raised foot is going to fall into a snare. What has been fancied a noose is only the former outline of the horse's foot and limb, uneffaced.

The engraved line is therefore to be conclusive; not experimental. "I have determined this," says the engraver. Much excellent pen drawing is excellent in being tentative,—in being experimental. Indeterminate, not through want of meaning, but through fulness of it—halting *wisely* between two opinions—feeling cautiously after clearer opinions. But your engraver has made up his opinion. This is so, and must for ever be so, he tells you. A very proper thing for a thoughtful man to say; a very improper and impertinent thing for a foolish one to say. Foolish engraving is consummately foolish work. Look,—all the world,—look for evermore, says the foolish engraver; see what a fool I have been. How many lines I have laid for nothing. How many lines upon lines, with no precept, much less superprecept.

38. Here, then, are two definite ethical characters in all engraved work. It is Athletic; and it is Resolute. Add one more; that it is Obedient;—in their infancy the nurse, but in their youth the slave, of the higher arts; servile, both in the mechanism and labour of it, and in its function of interpreting the schools of painting as superior to itself.

And this relation to the higher arts we will study at the source of chief power in all the normal skill of Christendom, Florence; and chiefly, as I said, in the work of one Florentine master, Sandro Botticelli.

LECTURE II.

THE RELATION OF ENGRAVING TO OTHER ARTS IN FLORENCE

39. FROM what was laid before you in my last lecture, you must now be aware that I do not mean, by the word 'engraving,' merely the separate art of producing plates from which black pictures may be printed.

I mean, by engraving, the art of producing decoration on a surface by the touches of a chisel or a burin; and I mean by its relation to other arts, the subordinate service of this linear work, in sculpture, in metal work, and in painting; or in the representation and repetition of painting.

And first, therefore, I have to map out the broad relations of the arts of sculpture, metal work, and painting, in Florence, among themselves, during the period in which the art of engraving was distinctly connected with them.*

40. You will find, or may remember, that in my lecture on Michael Angelo and Tintoret I indicated the singular importance, in the history of art, of a space of forty years, between 1480, and the year in which Raphael died, 1520. Within that space of time the change was completed, from the principles of ancient, to those of existing, art;—a

* Compare Aratra Pentelici, § 154.

manifold change, not definable in brief terms, but most clearly characterized, and easily remembered, as the change of conscientious and didactic art, into that which proposes to itself no duty beyond technical skill, and no object but the pleasure of the beholder. Of that momentous change itself I do not purpose to speak in the present course of lectures; but my endeavour will be to lay before you a rough chart of the course of the arts in Florence up to the time when it took place; a chart indicating for you, definitely, the growth of conscience, in work which is distinctively conscientious, and the perfecting of expression and means of popular address, in that which is distinctively didactic.

41. Means of popular address, observe, which have become singularly important to us at this day. Nevertheless, remember that the power of printing, or reprinting, black *pictures*,—practically contemporary with that of reprinting black *letters*,—modified the art of the draughtsman only as it modified that of the scribe. Beautiful and unique writing, as beautiful and unique painting or engraving, remain exactly what they were; but other useful and reproductive methods of both have been superadded. Of these, it is acutely said by Dr. Alfred Woltmann,*—

“A far more important part is played in the art-life of Germany by the technical arts for the *multiplying* of works; for Germany,

* “Holbein and His Time,” 4to, Bentley, 1872, (a very valuable book,) p. 17. Italics mine.

while it was the land of book-printing, is also the land of picture-printing. Indeed, wood-engraving, which preceded the invention of book-printing, *prepared the way for it, and only left one step more necessary for it.* Book-printing and picture-printing have both the same inner cause for their origin, namely, the impulse to make each mental gain a common blessing. Not merely princes and rich nobles were to have the privilege of adorning their private chapels and apartments with beautiful religious pictures; the poorest man was also to have his delight in that which the artist had devised and produced. It was not sufficient for him when it stood in the church as an altar-shrine, visible to him and to the congregation from afar; he desired to have it as his own, to carry it about with him, to bring it into his own home. The grand importance of wood-engraving and copperplate is not sufficiently estimated in historical investigations. They were not alone of use in the advance of art; they form an epoch in the entire life of mind and culture. The idea embodied and multiplied in pictures became like that embodied in the printed word, the herald of every intellectual movement, and conquered the world."

42. "Conquered the world"? The rest of the sentence is true, but this, hyperbolic, and greatly false. It should have been said that both painting and engraving have conquered much of the good in the world, and, hitherto, little or none of the evil.

Nor do I hold it usually an advantage to art, in teaching, that it *should* be common, or constantly seen. In becoming intelligibly and kindly beautiful, while it remains solitary and unrivalled, it has a greater power. Westminster Abbey is more didactic to the English nation, than a million of popular illustrated treatises on architecture.

Nay, even that it cannot be understood but with some difficulty, and must be sought before it can be seen, is no harm. The noblest didactic art is, as it were, set on a hill, and its disciples come to it. The vilest destructive and corrosive art stands at the street corners, crying, "Turn in hither; come, eat of my bread, and drink of my wine, which I have mingled."

And Dr. Woltmann has allowed himself too easily to fall into the common notion of Liberalism, that bad art, disseminated, is instructive, and good art isolated, not so. The question is, first, I assure you, whether what art you have got is good or bad. If essentially bad, the more you see of it, the worse for you. Entirely popular art is all that is noble, in the cathedral, the council chamber, and the market-place; not the paltry coloured print pinned on the wall of a private room.

43. I despise the poor!—do I, think you? Not so. They only despise the poor who think them better off with police news, and coloured tracts of the story of Joseph and Potiphar's wife, than they were with Luini painting on their church-walls, and Donatello carving the pillars of their Market-places.

Nevertheless, the effort to be universally, instead of locally, didactic, modified advantageously, as you know, and in a thousand ways varied, the earlier art of engraving: and the development of its popular power, whether for good or evil, came exactly—so fate appointed—at a time when the minds of the masses were agitated by the

struggle which closed in the Reformation in some countries, and in the desperate refusal of Reformation in others.* The two greatest masters of engraving whose lives we are to study, were, both of them, passionate reformers: Holbein no less than Luther; Botticelli no less than Savonarola.

44. Reformers, I mean, in the full and, accurately, the only, sense. Not preachers of new doctrines; but witnesses against the betrayal of the old ones, which were on the lips of all men, and in the lives of none. Nay, the painters are indeed more pure reformers than the priests. They rebuked the manifest vices of men, while they realized whatever was loveliest in their faith. Priestly reform soon enraged itself into mere contest for personal opinions; while, without rage, but in stern rebuke of all that was vile in conduct or thought,—in declaration of the always-received faiths of the Christian Church, and in warning of the power of faith, and death,† over the petty designs of men,—Botticelli and Holbein together fought foremost in the ranks of the reformation.

45. To-day I will endeavour to explain how they attained such rank. Then, in the next two lectures, the technics

* See Carlyle, Frederick, Book III., chap. viii.

† I believe I am taking too much trouble in writing these lectures. This sentence, § 44, has cost me, I suppose, first and last, about as many hours as there are lines in it;—and my choice of these two words, faith and death, as representatives of power, will perhaps, after all, only puzzle the reader.

of both,—their way of speaking; and in the last two, what they had got to say.

First, then, we ask how they attained this rank;—who taught *them* what they were finally best to teach? How far must every people—how far did this Florentine people—teach its masters, before *they* could teach *it*?

Even in these days, when every man is, by hypothesis, as good as another, does not the question sound strange to you? You recognize in the past, as you think, clearly, that national advance takes place always under the guidance of masters, or groups of masters, possessed of what appears to be some new personal sensibility or gift of invention; and we are apt to be reverent to these alone, as if the nation itself had been unprogressive, and suddenly awakened, or converted, by the genius of one man.

No idea can be more superficial. Every nation must teach its tutors, and prepare itself to receive them; but the fact on which our impression is founded—the rising, apparently by chance, of men whose singular gifts suddenly melt the multitude, already at the point of fusion; or suddenly form, and *inform*, the multitude which has gained coherence enough to be capable of formation,—enables us to measure and map the gain of national intellectual territory, by tracing first the lifting of the mountain chains of its genius.

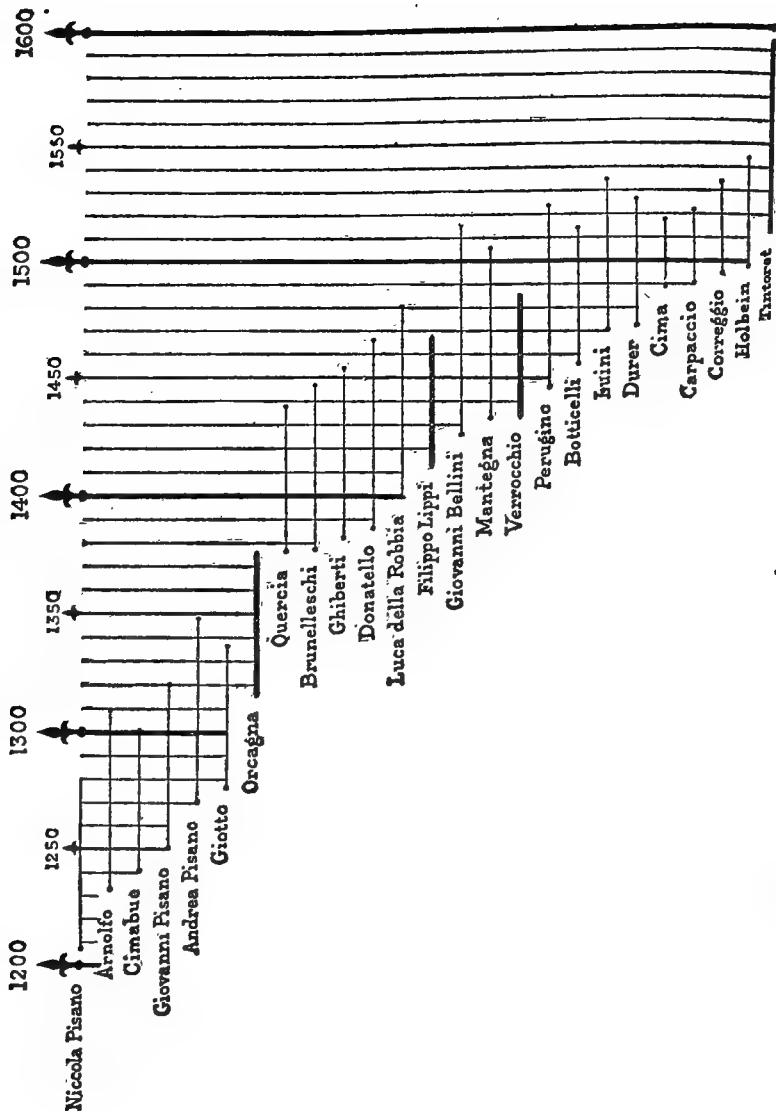
46. I have told you that we have nothing to do at present with the great transition from ancient to modern habits of thought which took place at the beginning of the

sixteenth century. I only want to go as far as that point;—where we shall find the old superstitious art represented *finally* by Perugino, and the modern scientific and anatomical art represented *primarily* by Michael Angelo. And the epithet bestowed on Perugino by Michael Angelo, ‘goffo nell’ arte,’ dunce, or blockhead, in art,—being, as far as my knowledge of history extends, the most cruel, the most false, and the most foolish insult ever offered by one great man to another,—does you at least good service, in showing how trenchant the separation is between the two orders of artists,*—how exclusively we may follow out the history of all the ‘goffi nell’ arte,’ and write our Florentine Dunciad, and Laus Stultitiæ, in peace; and never trench upon the thoughts or ways of these proud ones, who showed their fathers’ nakedness, and snatched their masters’ fame.

47. The Florentine dunces in art are a multitude; but I only want you to know something about twenty of them.

Twenty!—you think that a grievous number? It may, perhaps, appease you a little to be told that when you really have learned a very little, accurately, about these twenty dunces, there are only five more men among the artists of Christendom whose works I shall ask you to

* He is said by Vasari to have called Francia the like. Francia is a child compared to Perugino; but a finished working-goldsmith and ornamental painter nevertheless; and one of the very last men to be called ‘goffo,’ except by unparalleled insolence.



examine while you are under my care. That makes twenty-five altogether,—an exorbitant demand on your attention, you still think? And yet, but a little while ago, you were all agog to get me to go and look at Mrs. A's sketches, and tell you what was to be thought about *them*; and I've had the greatest difficulty to keep Mrs. B's photographs from being shown side by side with the Raphael drawings in the University galleries. And you will waste any quantity of time in looking at Mrs. A's sketches or Mrs. B's photographs; and yet you look grave, because, out of nineteen centuries of European art-labour and thought, I ask you to learn something seriously about the works of five-and-twenty men!

48. It is hard upon you, doubtless, considering the quantity of time you must nowadays spend in trying which can hit balls farthest. So I will put the task into the simplest form I can.

Here are the names of the twenty-five men,* and opposite each, a line indicating the length of his life, and the position of it in his century. The diagram still, however, needs a few words of explanation. Very chiefly, for those who know anything of my writings, there is needed explanation of its not including the names of Titian, Reynolds, Velasquez, Turner, and other such men, always reverently put before you at other times.

* The diagram used at the lecture is engraved on the opposite leaf; the reader had better draw it larger for himself, as it had to be made inconveniently small for this size of leaf.

They are absent, because I have no fear of your not looking at these. All your lives through, if you care about art, you will be looking at them. But while you are here at Oxford, I want to make you learn what you should know of these earlier, many of them weaker, men, who yet, for the very reason of their greater simplicity of power, are better guides for you, and of whom some will remain guides to all generations. And, as regards the subject of our present course, I have a still more weighty reason;—Vandyke, Gainsborough, Titian, Reynolds, Valasquez, and the rest, are essentially portrait painters. They give you the likeness of a man: they have nothing to say either about his future life, or his gods. ‘That is the look of him,’ they say: ‘here, on earth, we know no more.’

49. But these, whose names I have engraved, have something to say—generally much,—either about the future life of man, or about his gods. They are therefore, literally, seers or prophets. False prophets, it may be, or foolish ones; of that you must judge; but you must read before you can judge; and read (or hear) them consistently; for you don’t know them till you have heard them out. But with Sir Joshua, or Titian, one portrait is as another: it is here a pretty lady, there a great lord; but speechless, all;—whereas, with these twenty-five men, each picture or statue is not merely another person of a pleasant society, but another chapter of a Sibylline book.

50. For this reason, then, I do not want Sir Joshua or

Velasquez in my defined group; and for my present purpose, I can spare from it even four others:—namely, three who have *too* special gifts, and must each be separately studied—Correggio, Carpaccio, Tintoret;—and one who has no special gift, but a balanced group of many—Cima. This leaves twenty-one for classification, of whom I will ask you to lay hold thus. You must continually have felt the difficulty caused by the names of centuries not tallying with their years;—the year 1201 being the first of the 13th century, and so on. I am always plagued by it myself, much as I have to think and write with reference to chronology; and I mean for the future, in our art chronology, to use as far as possible a different form of notation.

51. In my diagram the vertical lines are the divisions of tens of years; the thick black lines divide the centuries. The horizontal lines, then, at a glance, tell you the length and date of each artist's life. In one or two instances I cannot find the date of birth; in one or two more, of death; and the line indicates then only the ascertained* period during which the artist worked.

And, thus represented, you see nearly all their lives run through the year of a new century; so that if the lines representing them were needles, and the black bars of the years 1300, 1400, 1500 were magnets, I could take up nearly all the needles by lifting the bars.

* 'Ascertained,' scarcely any date ever is, quite satisfactorily. The diagram only represents what is practically and broadly true. I may have to modify it greatly in detail.

52. I will actually do this, then, in three other simple diagrams. I place a rod for the year 1300 over the lines of life, and I take up all it touches. I have to drop Niccola Pisano, but I catch five. Now, with my rod of 1400, I have dropped Orcagna indeed, but I again catch five. Now, with my rod of 1500, I indeed drop Filippo Lippi and Verrocchio, but I catch seven. And here I have three pennons, with the staves of the years 1300, 1400, and 1500 running through them,—holding the names of nearly all the men I want you to study in easily remembered groups of five, five, and seven. And these three groups I shall hereafter call the 1300 group, 1400 group, and 1500 group.

53. But why should four unfortunate masters be dropped out?

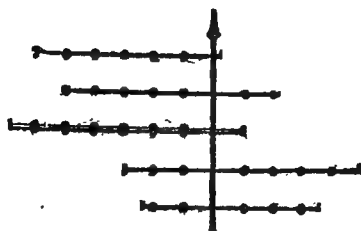
Well, I want to drop them out, at any rate; but not in disrespect. In hope, on the contrary, to make you remember them very separately indeed;—for this following reason.

We are in the careless habit of speaking of men who form a great number of pupils, and have a host of inferior satellites round them, as masters of great schools.

But before you call a man a master, you should ask, Are his pupils greater or less than himself? If they are greater than himself, he is a master indeed;—he has been a true teacher. But if all his pupils are less than himself, he may have been a great *man*, but in all probability has been a bad *master*, or no master.

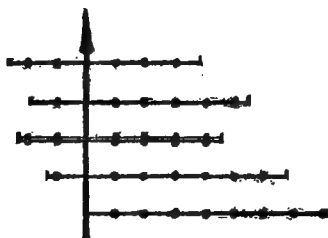
1300.

1240—1303 Cimabue
 1250—1321 Giovanni Pisano
 1282—1310 ARNOLFO
 1270—1345 Andrea Pisano
 1276—1336 Giotto



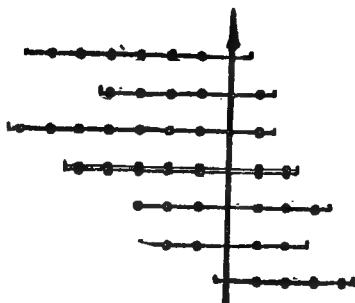
1400.

1374—1438 Quercia
 1381—1455 Ghiberti
 1377—1446 BRUNELLESCHI
 1386—1468 Donatello
 1400—1481 Luca



1500.

1431—1506 Mantegna
 1457—1515 Botticelli
 1428—1516 Bellini
 1446—1524 PERUGINO
 1470—1535 Luini
 1471—1527 Durer
 1498—1543 Holbein



Now these men, whom I have signally left out of my groups, are true *Masters*.

Niccola Pisano taught all Italy; but chiefly his own son, who succeeded, and in some things very much surpassed him.

Orcagna taught all Italy, after him, down to Michael Angelo. And these two—Lippi, the religious schools, Verrocchio, the artist schools, of their century.

Lippi taught Sandro Botticelli; and Verrocchio taught Leonardo da Vinci, Lorenzo di Credi, and Perugino. Have I not good reason to separate the masters of such pupils from the schools they created?

54. But how is it that I can drop just the cards I want out of my pack?

Well certainly I force and fit matters a little: I leave some men out of my list whom I should like to have in it;—Benozzo, Gozzoli, for instance, and Mino da Fiesole; but I can do without them, and so can you also, for the present. I catch Luca by a hair's-breadth only, with my 1400 rod; but on the whole, with very little coaxing, I get the groups in this memorable and quite literally 'handy' form. For see, I write my list of five, five, and seven, on bits of pasteboard; I hinge my rods to these; and you can brandish the school of 1400 in your left hand, and of 1500 in your right, like—railway signals;—and I wish all railway signals were as clear. Once learn, thoroughly, the groups in this artificially contracted form, and you can refine and complete afterwards at your leisure.

55. And thus actually flourishing my two pennons, and getting my grip of the men, in either hand, I find a notable thing concerning my two flags. The men whose names I hold in my left hand are all sculptors; the men whose names I hold in my right are all painters.

You will infallibly suspect me of having chosen them thus on purpose. No, honour bright!—I chose simply the greatest men,—those I wanted to talk to you about. I arranged them by their dates; I put them into three conclusive pennons; and behold what follows!

56. Farther, note this: in the 1300 group, four out of the five men are architects as well as sculptors and painters. In the 1400 group, there is one architect; in the 1500, none. And the meaning of that is, that in 1300 the arts were all united, and duly led by architecture; in 1400, sculpture began to assume too separate a power to herself; in 1500, painting arrogated all, and, at last, betrayed all. From which, with much other collateral evidence, you may justly conclude that the three arts ought to be practised together, and that they naturally are so. I long since asserted that no man could be an architect who was not a sculptor. As I learned more and more of my business, I perceived also that no man could be a sculptor who was not an architect;—that is to say, who had not knowledge enough, and pleasure enough in structural law, to be able to build, on occasion, better than a mere builder. And so, finally, I now positively aver to you that nobody, in the graphic arts, can be quite rightly

a master of anything, who is not master of everything!

57. The junction of the three arts in men's minds, at the best times, is shortly signified in these words of Chaucer. Love's Garden,

Everidele

Enclosed was, and walled well
With high walls, embatailled,
Portrayed without, and well entayled
With many rich portraitures.

The French original is better still, and gives four arts in unison:—

Quant suis avant un pou alé
Et vy un vergier grant et le,
Bien cloz de bon mur batillié
Pourtrait dehors, et entaillié
Ou (for au) maintes riches escriptures.

Read also carefully the description of the temples of Mars and Venus in the Knight's Tale. Contemporary French uses 'entaille' even of solid sculpture and of the living form; and Pygmalion, as a perfect master, professes wood carving, ivory carving, wax-work, and iron-work, no less than stone sculpture:—

Pimalion, uns entaillieres
Pourtraians en fuz * et en pierres,
En mettaux, en os, et en cire,
Et en toute autre matire.

* For fust, log of wood, erroneously 'fer' in the later printed editions. Compare the account of the works of Art and Nature, towards the end of the Romance of the Rose.

58. I made a little sketch, when last in Florence, of a subject which will fix the idea of this unity of the arts in your minds. At the base of the tower of Giotto are two rows of hexagonal panels, filled with bas-reliefs. Some of these are by unknown hands,—some by Andrea Pisano, some by Luca della Robbia, two by Giotto himself; of these I sketched the panel representing the art of Painting.

You have in that bas-relief one of the foundation-stones of the most perfectly-built tower in Europe; you have that stone carved by its architect's own hand; you find, further, that this architect and sculptor was the greatest painter of his time, and the friend of the greatest poet; and you have represented by him a painter in his shop,—bottega,—as symbolic of the entire art of painting.

59. In which representation, please note how carefully Giotto shows you the tabernacles, or niches, in which the paintings are to be placed. Not independent of their frames, these panels of his, you see!

Have you ever considered, in the early history of painting, how important also is the history of the frame maker? It is a matter, I assure you, needing your very best consideration. For the frame was made before the picture. The painted window is much, but the aperture it fills was thought of before it. The fresco by Giotto is much, but the vault it adorns was planned first. Who thought of these;—who built?

Questions taking us far back before the birth of the shepherd boy of Fesolé,—questions not to be answered by

history of painting only, still less of painting in *Italy* only.

60. And in pointing out to you this fact, I may once for all prove to you the essential unity of the arts, and show you how impossible it is to understand one without reference to another. Which I wish you to observe all the more closely, that you may use, without danger of being misled, the data, of unequalled value, which have been collected by Crowe and Cavalcasella, in the book which they have called a History of Painting in Italy, but which is in fact only a dictionary of details relating to that history. Such a title is an absurdity on the face of it. For, first, you can no more write the history of painting in Italy than you can write the history of the south wind in Italy. The sirocco does indeed produce certain effects at Genoa, and others at Rome; but what would be the value of a treatise upon the winds, which, for the honour of any country, assumed that every city of it had a native sirocco?

But, further,—imagine what success would attend the meteorologist who should set himself to give an account of the south wind, but take no notice of the north!

And, finally, suppose an attempt to give you an account of either wind, but none of the seas, or mountain passes, by which they were nourished, or directed.

61. For instance, I am in this course of lectures to give you an account of a single and minor branch of graphic art,—engraving. But observe how many references to local circumstances it involves. There are three materials

for it, we said ;—stone, wood, and metal. Stone engraving is the art of countries possessing marble and gems ; wood engraving, of countries overgrown with forest ; metal engraving, of countries possessing treasures of silver and gold. And the style of a stone engraver is formed on pillars and pyramids ; the style of a wood engraver under the eaves of larch cottages ; the style of a metal engraver in the treasuries of kings. Do you suppose I could rightly explain to you the value of a single touch on brass by Finiguerra, or on box by Bewick, unless I had grasp of the great laws of climate and country ; and could trace the inherited sirocco or tramontana of thought to which the souls and bodies of the men owed their existence ?

62. You see that in this flag of 1300 there is a dark strong line in the centre, against which you read the name of Arnolfo.

In writing our Florentine Dunciad, or History of Fools, can we possibly begin with a better day than All Fools' Day ? On All Fools' Day—the first, if you like better so to call it, of the month of *opening*,—in the year 1300, is signed the document making Arnolfo a citizen of Florence, and in 1310 he dies, chief master of the works of the Cathedral there. To this man, Crowe and Cavalcasella give half a page, out of three volumes of five hundred pages each.

But lower down in my flag, (not put there because of any inferiority, but by order of chronology,) you will see a name sufficiently familiar to you—that of Giotto ; and

to him, our historians of painting in Italy give some hundred pages, under the impression, stated by them at page 243 of their volume, that "in his hands, art in the Peninsula became entitled for the first time to the name of Italian."

63. Art became Italian! Yes, but *what* art? Your authors give a perspective—or what they call such,—of the upper church of Assisi, as if that were merely an accidental occurrence of blind walls for Giotto to paint on!

But how came the upper church of Assisi there? How came it to be vaulted—to be aisled? How came Giotto to be asked to paint upon it?

The art that built it, good or bad, must have been an Italian one, before Giotto. He could not have painted on the air. Let us see how his panels were made for him.

64. This Captain—the centre of our first group—Arnolfo, has always hitherto been called 'Arnolfo di Lapo;'—Arnolfo the son of Lapo.

Modern investigators come down on us delightedly, to tell us—Arnolfo was *not* the son of Lapo.

In these days you will have half a dozen doctors, writing each a long book, and the sense of all will be,—Arnolfo wasn't the son of Lapo. Much good may you get of that!

Well, you will find the fact to be, there was a great Northman builder, a true son of Thor, who came down into Italy in 1200, served the order of St. Francis there, built Assisi, taught Arnolfo how to build, with Thor's

hammer, and disappeared, leaving his name uncertain—Jacopo—Lapo—nobody knows what. Arnolfo always recognizes this man as his true father, who put the soul-life into him; he is known to his Florentines always as Lapo's Arnolfo.

That, or some likeness of that, is the vital fact. You never can get at the literal limitation of living facts. They disguise themselves by the very strength of their life: get told again and again in different ways by all manner of people;—the literalness of them is turned topsy-turvy, inside-out, over and over again;—then the fools come and read them wrong side upwards, or else, say there never was a fact at all. Nothing delights a true block-head so much as to prove a negative;—to show that everybody has been wrong. Fancy the delicious sensation, to an empty-headed creature, of fancying for a moment that he has emptied everybody else's head as well as his own! nay, that, for once, his own hollow bottle of a head has had the best of other bottles, and has been *first* empty; first to know—nothing.

65. Hold, then, steadily the first tradition about this Arnolfo. That his real father was called "Cambio?" matters to you not a straw. That he never called himself Cambio's Arnolfo—that nobody else ever called him so, down to Vasari's time, is an infinitely significant fact to you. In my twenty-second letter in *Fors Clavigera* you will find some account of the noble habit of the Italian artists to call themselves by their master's names, con-

sidering their master as their true father. If not the name of the master, they take that of their native place, as having owed the character of their life to that. They rarely take their own family name: sometimes it is not even known,—when best known, it is unfamiliar to us. The great Pisan artists, for instance, never bear any other name than ‘the Pisan;’ among the other five-and-twenty names in my list, not above six, I think, the two German, with four Italian, are family names. Perugino, (Peter of Perugia), Luini, (Bernard of Luino), Quercia, (James of Quercia), Correggio, (Anthony of Correggio), are named from their native places. Nobody would have understood me if I had called Giotto, ‘Ambrose Bondone;’ or Tintoret, Robusti; or even Raphael, Sanzio. Botticelli is named from his master; Ghiberti from his father-in-law; and Ghirlandajo from his work. Orcagna, who *did*, for a wonder, name himself from his father, Andrea Cione, of Florence, has been always called ‘Angel’ by everybody else; while Arnolfo, who never named himself from his father, is now like to be fathered against his will.

But, I again beg of you, keep to the old story. For it represents, however inaccurately in detail, clearly in sum, the fact, that some great master of German Gothic at this time came down into Italy, and changed the entire form of Italian architecture by his touch. So that while Niccola and Giovanni Pisano are still virtually Greek artists, experimentally introducing Gothic forms, Arnolfo and Giotto adopt the entire Gothic ideal of form, and 、 、

thenceforward use the pointed arch and steep gable as the limits of sculpture.

66. Hitherto I have been speaking of the relations of my twenty-five men to each other. But now, please note their relations altogether to the art before them. These twenty-five include, I say, all the great masters of *Christian* art.

Before them, the art was too savage to be Christian ; afterwards, too carnal to be Christian.

Too savage to be Christian ? I will justify that assertion hereafter ; but you will find that the European art of 1200 includes all the most developed and characteristic conditions of the style in the north which you have probably been accustomed to think of as NORMAN, and which you may always most conveniently call so ; and the most developed conditions of the style in the south, which, formed out of effete Greek, Persian, and Roman tradition, you may, in like manner, most conveniently express by the familiar word BYZANTINE. Whatever you call them, they are in origin adverse in temper, and remain so up to the year 1200. Then an influence appears, seemingly that of one man, Nicholas the Pisan, (our first MASTER, observe,) and a new spirit adopts what is best in each, and gives to what it adopts a new energy of its own, namely, this conscientious and didactic power which is the speciality of its progressive existence. And just as the new-born and natural art of Athens collects and reanimates Pelasgian and Egyptian tradition, purifying their worship,

and perfecting their work, into the living heathen faith of the world, so this new-born and natural art of Florence collects and animates the Norman and Byzantine tradition, and forms out of the perfected worship and work of both, the honest Christian faith, and vital craftsmanship, of the world.

67. Get this first summary, therefore, well into your minds. The word 'Norman' I use roughly for North-savage;—roughly, but advisedly. I mean Lombard, Scandinavian, Frankish; everything north-savage that you can think of, except Saxon. (I have a reason for that exception; never mind it just now.)*

All north-savage I call NORMAN, all south-savage I call BYZANTINE; this latter including dead native Greek primarily—then dead foreign Greek, in Rome;—then Arabian—Persian—Phœnician—Indian—all you can think of, in art of hot countries, up to this year 1200, I rank under the one term Byzantine. Now all this cold art—Norman, and all this hot art—Byzantine, is virtually dead, till 1200. It has no conscience, no didactic power;† it is devoid of both, in the sense that dreams are.

* Of course it would have been impossible to express in any accurate terms, short enough for the compass of a lecture, the conditions of opposition between the Heptarchy and the Northmen;—between the Byzantine and Roman;—and between the Byzantine and Arab, which form minor, but not less trenchant, divisions of Art-province, for subsequent delineation. If you can refer to my "Stones of Venice," see § 20 of its first chapter.

† Again much too broad a statement: not to be qualified but by a

Then in the 13th century, men wake as if they heard an alarm through the whole vault of heaven, and true human life begins again, and the cradle of this life is the Val d'Arno. There the northern and southern nations meet; there they lay down their enmities; there they are first baptized unto John's baptism for the remission of sins; there is born, and thence exiled,—thought faithless for breaking the font of baptism to save a child from drowning, in his 'bel San Giovanni,'—the greatest of Christian poets; he who had pity even for the lost.

68. Now, therefore, my whole history of *Christian* architecture and painting begins with this Baptistery of Florence, and with its associated Cathedral. Arnolfo brought the one into the form in which you now see it; he laid the foundation of the other, and that to purpose, and he is therefore the CAPTAIN of our first school.

For this Florentine Baptistery * is the great one of the

length of explanation here impossible. My lectures on Architecture, now in preparation, will contain further detail.

* At the side of my page, here, I find the following memorandum, which was expanded in the viva-voce lecture. The reader must make what he can of it, for I can't expand it here.

Sense of Italian Church plan.

Baptistery, to make Christians in; house, or dome, for them to pray and be preached to in; bell-tower, to ring all over the town, when they were either to pray together, rejoice together, or to be warned of danger.

Harvey's picture of the Covenanters, with a shepherd on the outlook, as a campanile.

world. Here is the centre of Christian knowledge and power.

And it is one piece of large *engraving*. White substance, cut into, and filled with black, and dark-green.

No more perfect work was afterwards done; and I wish you to grasp the idea of this building clearly and irrevocably,—first, in order (as I told you in a previous lecture) to quit yourselves thoroughly of the idea that ornament should be decorated construction; and, secondly, as the noblest type of the intaglio ornamentation, which developed itself into all minor application of black and white to engraving.

69. That it should do so first at Florence, was the natural sequence, and the just reward, of the ancient skill of Etruria in chased metal-work. The effects produced in gold, either by embossing or engraving, were the direct means of giving interest to his surfaces at the command of the ‘auri faber,’ or orfevre: and every conceivable artifice of studding, chiselling, and interlacing was exhausted by the artists in gold, who were at the head of the metal-workers, and from whom the ranks of the sculptors were reinforced.

The old French word ‘orfroiz,’ (*aurifrigia*,) expresses essentially what we call ‘frosted’ work in gold; that which resembles small dew or crystals of hoar-frost; the ‘*frigia*’ coming from the Latin *frigus*. To chase, or enchase, is not properly said of the gold; but of the jewel

which it secures with hoops or ridges, (French, *enchasser**). Then the armourer, or cup and casket maker, added to this kind of decoration that of flat inlaid enamel; and the silver-worker, finding that the raised filigree (still a staple at Genoa) only attracted tarnish, or got crushed, early sought to decorate a surface which would bear external friction, with labyrinths of safe incision.

70. Of the *security* of incision as a means of permanent decoration, as opposed to ordinary carving, here is a beautiful instance in the base of one of the external shafts of the Cathedral of Lucca; 13th-century work, which by this time, had it been carved in relief, would have been a shapeless remnant of indecipherable bosses. But it is still as safe as if it had been cut yesterday, because the smooth round mass of the pillar is entirely undisturbed; into that, furrows are cut with a chisel as much under command and as powerful as a burin. The effect of the design is trusted entirely to the depth of these incisions—here dying out and expiring in the light of the marble, there deepened, by drill holes, into as definitely a black line as if it were drawn with ink; and describing the outline of the leafage with a delicacy of touch and of perception which no man will ever surpass, and which very few have rivalled, in the proudest days of design.

71. This security, in silver plates, was completed by filling the furrows with the black paste which at once

* And 'chassis,' a window frame, or tracery.

exhibited and preserved them. The transition from that niello-work to modern engraving is one of no real moment: my object is to make you understand the qualities which constitute the *merit* of the engraving, whether charged with niello or ink. And this I hope ultimately to accomplish by studying with you some of the works of the four men, Botticelli and Mantegna in the south, Durer and Holbein in the north, whose names I have put in our last flag, above and beneath those of the three mighty painters, Perugino the captain, Bellini on one side—Luini on the other.

The four following lectures* will contain data necessary for such study: you must wait longer before I can place before you those by which I can justify what must greatly surprise some of my audience—my having given Perugino the captain's place among the three painters.

72. But I do so, at least primarily, because what is commonly thought affected in his design is indeed the true remains of the great architectual symmetry which was soon to be lost, and which makes him the true follower of Arnolfo and Brunelleschi; and because he is a sound craftsman and workman to the very heart's core. A noble, gracious, and quiet labourer from youth to death,

* This present lecture does not, as at present published, justify its title; because I have not thought it necessary to write the viva-voce portions of it which amplified the 69th paragraph. I will give the substance of them in better form elsewhere; meantime the part of the lecture here given may be in its own way useful.

—never weary, never impatient, never untender, never untrue. Not Tintoret in power, not Raphael in flexibility, not Holbein in veracity, not Luini in love,—their gathered gifts he has, in balanced and fruitful measure, fit to be the guide, and impulse, and father of all.

LECTURE III.

THE TECHNIQS OF WOOD ENGRAVING.

73. I AM to-day to begin to tell you what it is necessary you should observe respecting methods of manual execution in the two great arts of engraving. Only to *begin* to tell you. There need be no end of telling you such things, if you care to hear them. The theory of art is soon mastered; but ‘dal detto al fatto, v’è gran tratto;’ and as I have several times told you in former lectures, every day shows me more and more the importance of the Hand.

74. Of the hand as a Servant, observe,—not of the hand as a Master. For there are two great kinds of manual work: one in which the hand is continually receiving and obeying orders; the other in which it is acting independently, or even giving orders of its own. And the dependent and submissive hand is a noble hand; but the independent or imperative hand is a vile one.

That is to say, as long as the pen, or chisel, or other graphic instrument, is moved under the direct influence of mental attention, and obeys orders of the brain, it is working nobly;—the moment it moves independently of

them, and performs some habitual dexterity of its own, it is base.

75. *Dexterity*—I say;—some ‘right-handedness’ of its own. We might wisely keep that word for what the hand does at the mind’s bidding; and use an opposite word—*sinisterity*,—for what it does at its own. For indeed we want such a word in speaking of modern art;—it is all full of *sinisterity*. Hands independent of brains;—the left hand, by division of labour, not knowing what the right does,—still less what it ought to do.

76. Turning, then, to our special subject. All engraving, I said, is *intaglio* in the solid. But the solid, in wood engraving, is a coarse substance, easily cut; and in metal, a fine substance, not easily. Therefore, in general, you may be prepared to accept ruder and more elementary work in one than the other; and it will be the means of appeal to blunter minds.

You probably already know the difference between the actual methods of producing a printed impression from wood and metal; but I may perhaps make the matter a little more clear. In metal engraving, you cut ditches, fill them with ink, and press your paper into them. In wood engraving, you leave ridges, rub the tops of them with ink, and stamp them on your paper.

The instrument with which the substance, whether of the wood or steel, is cut away, is the same. It is a solid ploughshare, which, instead of throwing the earth aside, throws it up and out, producing at first a simple

ravine, or furrow, in the wood or metal, which you can widen by another cut, or extend by successive cuts. This (Fig. 1) is the general shape of the solid ploughshare :



FIG. 1.

but it is of course made sharper or blunter at pleasure. The furrow produced is at first the wedge-shaped or cuneiform ravine, already so much dwelt upon in my lectures on Greek sculpture.

77. Since, then, in wood printing, you print from the surface left solid; and, in metal printing, from the hollows cut into it, it follows that if you put few touches on wood, you draw, as on a slate, with white lines, leaving a quantity of black; but if you put few touches on metal, you draw with black lines, leaving a quantity of white.

Now the eye is not in the least offended by quantity of white, but is, or ought to be, greatly saddened and offended by quantity of black. Hence it follows that you must never put little work on wood. You must not sketch upon it. You may sketch on metal as much as you please.

78. "Paradox," you will say, as usual. "Are not all our journals,—and the best of them, *Punch*, par excellence,—full of the most brilliantly swift and slight sketches, engraved on wood; while line-engravings take ten years to produce, and cost ten guineas each when they are done?"

Yes, that is so ; but observe, in the first place, what appears to you a sketch on wood is not so at all, but a most laborious and careful imitation of a sketch on paper ; whereas when you see what appears to be a sketch on metal, it *is* one. And in the second place, so far as the popular fashion is contrary to this natural method,—so far as we do in reality try to produce effects of sketching in wood, and of finish in metal,—our work is wrong.

Those apparently careless and free sketches on the wood ought to have been stern and deliberate ; those exquisitely toned and finished engravings on metal ought to have looked, instead, like free ink sketches on white paper. That is the theorem which I propose to you for consideration, and which, in the two branches of its assertion, I hope to prove to you ; the first part of it, (that wood-cutting should be careful,) in this present lecture ; the second, (that metal-cutting should be, at least in a far greater degree than it is now, slight, and free,) in the following one.

79. Next, observe the distinction in respect of *thickness*, no less than number, of lines which may properly be used in the two methods.

In metal engraving, it is easier to lay a fine line than a thick one ; and however fine the line may be, it lasts ;—but in wood engraving it requires extreme precision and skill to leave a thin dark line, and when left, it will be quickly beaten down by a careless printer. Therefore, the virtue of wood engraving is to exhibit the qualities

and power of *thick* lines ; and of metal engraving, to exhibit the qualities and power of *thin* ones.

All thin dark lines, therefore, in wood, broadly speaking, are to be used only in case of necessity ; and thick lines, on metal, only in case of necessity.

80. Though, however, thin *dark* lines cannot easily be produced in wood, thin *light* ones may be struck in an instant. Nevertheless, even thin light ones must not be used, except with extreme caution. For observe, they are equally useless as outline, and for expression of mass. You know how far from exemplary or delightful your boy's first quite voluntary exercises in white line drawing on your slate were ? You could, indeed, draw a goblin satisfactorily in such method ;—a round O, with arms and legs to it, and a scratch under two dots in the middle, would answer the purpose ; but if you wanted to draw a pretty face, you took pencil or pen, and paper—not your slate. Now, that instinctive feeling that a white outline is wrong, is deeply founded. For Nature herself draws with diffused light, and concentrated dark ;—never, except in storm or twilight, with diffused dark, and concentrated light ; and the thing we all like best to see drawn—the human face—cannot be drawn with white touches, but by extreme labour. For the pupil and iris of the eye, the eyebrow, the nostril, and the lip are all set in dark on pale ground. You can't draw a white eyebrow, a white pupil of the eye, a white nostril, and a white mouth, on a dark ground. Try it, and see what a

spectre you get. But the same number of dark touches, skilfully applied, will give the idea of a beautiful face. And what is true of the subtlest subject you have to represent, is equally true of inferior ones. Nothing lovely can be quickly represented by white touches. You must hew out, if your means are so restricted, the form by sheer labour; and that both cunning and dextrous. The Florentine masters, and Durer, often practise the achievement, and there are many drawings by the Lippis, Mantegna, and other leading Italian draughtsmen, completed to great perfection with the white line; but only for the sake of severest study, nor is their work imitable by inferior men. And such studies, however accomplished, always mark a disposition to regard chiaroscuro too much, and local colour too little.

We conclude, then, that we must never trust, in wood, to our power of outline with white; and our general laws, thus far determined, will be—thick lines in wood; thin ones in metal; complete drawing on wood; sketches, if we choose, on metal.

81. But why, in wood, lines at all? Why not cut out white *spaces*, and use the chisel as if its incisions were so much white paint? Many fine pieces of wood-cutting are indeed executed on this principle. Bewick does nearly all his foliage so; and continually paints the light plumes of his birds with single touches of his chisel, as if he were laying on white.

But this is not the finest method of wood-cutting. It

implies the idea of a system of light and shade in which the shadow is totally black. Now, no light and shade can be good, much less pleasant, in which all the shade is stark black. Therefore the finest wood-cutting ignores light and shade, and expresses only form, and *dark local colour*. And it is convenient, for simplicity's sake, to anticipate what I should otherwise defer telling you until next lecture, that fine metal engraving, like fine wood-cutting, ignores light and shade; and that, in a word, all good engraving whatsoever does so.

82. I hope that my saying so will make you eager to interrupt me. 'What! Rembrandt's etchings, and Lupton's mezzotints, and Le Keux's line-work,—do you mean to tell us that these ignore light and shade?'

I never said that *mezzotint* ignored light and shade, or ought to do so. Mezzotint is properly to be considered as chiaroscuro drawing on metal. But I do mean to tell you that both Rembrandt's etchings, and Le Keux's finished line-work, are misapplied labour, in so far as they regard chiaroscuro; and that consummate engraving never uses it as a primal element of pleasure.

83. We have now got our principles so far defined that I can proceed to illustration of them by example.

Here are facsimiles, very marvellous ones,* of two of

* By Mr. Burgess. The toil and skill necessary to produce a facsimile of this degree of precision will only be recognized by the reader who has had considerable experience of actual work.



THE LAST FURROW.

(FIG. 2) FAC-SIMILE FROM HOLBEIN'S WOODCUT.

the best wood engravings ever produced by art,—two subjects in Holbein's *Dance of Death*. You will probably like best that I should at once proceed to verify my last and most startling statement, that fine engraving disdained *chiaroscuro*.

This vignette (Fig. 2) represents a sunset in the open mountainous fields of southern Germany. And Holbein is so entirely careless about the light and shade, which a Dutchman would first have thought of, as resulting from the sunset, that, as he works, he forgets altogether where his light comes from. Here, actually, the shadow of the figure is cast from the side, right across the picture, while the sun is in front. And there is not the slightest attempt to indicate gradation of light in the sky, darkness in the forest, or any other positive element of *chiaroscuro*.

This is not because Holbein cannot give *chiaroscuro* if he chooses. He is twenty times a stronger master of it than Rembrandt; but he, therefore, knows exactly when and how to use it; and that wood engraving is not the proper means for it. The quantity of it which is needful for his story, and will not, by any sensational violence, either divert, or vulgarly enforce, the attention, he will give; and that with an unrivalled subtlety. Therefore I must ask you for a moment or two to quit the subject of *technics*, and look what these two woodcuts mean.

84. The one I have first shown you is of a ploughman ploughing at evening. It is Holbein's object, here, to express the diffused and intense light of a golden summer

sunset, so far as is consistent with grander purposes. A modern French or English chiaroscurist would have covered his sky with fleecy clouds, and relieved the ploughman's hat and his horses against it in strong black, and put sparkling touches on the furrows and grass. Holbein scornfully casts all such tricks aside; and draws the whole scene in pure white, with simple outlines.

85. And yet, when I put it beside this second vignette, (Fig. 3), which is of a preacher preaching in a feebly-lighted church, you will feel that the diffused warmth of the one subject, and diffused twilight in the other, are complete; and they will finally be to you more impressive than if they had been wrought out with every superficial means of effect, on each block.

For it is as a symbol, not as a scenic effect, that in each case the chiaroscuro is given. Holbein, I said, is at the head of the painter-reformers, and his Dance of Death is the most energetic and telling of all the forms given, in this epoch, to the *Rationalist* spirit of reform, preaching the new Gospel of Death,—“It is no matter whether you are priest or layman, what you believe, or what you do: here is the end.” You shall see, in the course of our inquiry, that Botticelli, in like manner, represents the *Faithful* and *Catholic* temper of reform.

86. The teaching of Holbein is therefore always melancholy,—for the most part purely rational; and entirely furious in its indignation against all who, either by actual injustice in this life, or by what he holds to be false pro-



THE TWO PREACHERS.

(FIG 3) FAC-SIMILE FROM HOLBEIN'S WOODCUT.

mise of another, destroy the good, or the energy, of the few days which man has to live. Against the rich, the luxurious, the Pharisee, the false lawyer, the priest, and the unjust judge, Holbein uses his fiercest mockery; but he is never himself unjust; never caricatures or equivocates; gives the facts as he knows them, with explanatory symbols, few and clear.

87. Among the powers which he hates, the pathetic and ingenious preaching of untruth is one of the chief; and it is curious to find his biographer, knowing this, and reasoning, as German critics nearly always do, from acquired knowledge, not perception, imagine instantly that he sees hypocrisy in the face of Holbein's preacher. "How skilfully," says Dr. Woltmann, "is the preacher propounding his doctrines; how thoroughly is his hypocrisy expressed in the features of his countenance, and in the gestures of his hands." But look at the cut yourself, candidly. I challenge you to find the slightest trace of hypocrisy in either feature or gesture. Holbein knew better. It is not the hypocrite who has power in the pulpit. It is the *sincere* preacher of untruth who does mischief there. The hypocrite's place of power is in trade, or in general society; none but the sincere ever get fatal influence in the pulpit. This man is a refined gentleman—ascetic, earnest, thoughtful, and kind. He scarcely uses the vantage even of his pulpit,—comes aside out of it, as an eager man would, pleading; he is intent on being understood—is understood; his congregation

are delighted—you might hear a pin drop among them : one is asleep indeed, who cannot see him, (being under the pulpit,) and asleep just because the teacher is as gentle as he is earnest, and speaks quietly.

88. How are we to know, then, that he speaks in vain? First, because among all his hearers you will not find one shrewd face. They are all either simple or stupid people : there is one nice woman in front of all, (else Holbein's representation had been caricature,) but she is not a shrewd one.

Secondly, by the light and shade. The church is not in extreme darkness—far from that ; a grey twilight is over everything, but the sun is totally shut out of it ;—not a ray comes in even at the window—*that* is darker than the walls, or vault.

Lastly, and chiefly, by the mocking expression of Death. Mocking, but not angry. The man has been preaching what he thought true. Death laughs at him, but is not indignant with him.

Death comes quietly : *I* am going to be preacher now ; here is your own hour-glass, ready for me. You have spoken many words in your day. But “of the things which you have spoken, *this* is the sum,”—your death-warrant, signed and sealed. There's your text for to-day.

89. Of this other picture, the meaning is more plain, and far more beautiful. The husbandman is old and gaunt, and has past his days, not in speaking, but pressing the iron into the ground. And the payment for his life's

work is, that he is clothed in rags, and his feet are bare on the clods; and he has no hat—but the brim of a hat only, and his long, unkempt grey hair comes through. But all the air is full of warmth and of peace; and, beyond his village church, there is, at last, light indeed. His horses lag in the furrow, and his own limbs totter and fail: but one comes to help him. ‘It is a long field,’ says Death; ‘but we’ll get to the end of it to-day,—you and I.’

90. And now that we know the meaning, we are able to discuss the technical qualities farther.

Both of these engravings, you will find, are executed with blunt lines; but more than that, they are executed with *quiet* lines, entirely steady.

Now, here I have in my hand a lively woodcut of the present day—a good average type of the modern style of wood-cutting; which you will all recognize.*

The shade in this is drawn on the wood (not *cut*, but drawn, observe,) at the rate of at least ten lines in a second: Holbein’s at the rate of about one line in three seconds.†

91. Now there are two different matters to be considered with respect to these two opposed methods of execution. The first, that the rapid work, though easy to the artist, is very difficult to the woodcutter; so that it

* The ordinary title-page of Punch.

† In the lecture-room, the relative rates of execution were shown; I arrived at this estimate by timing the completion of two small pieces of shade in the two methods.

implies instantly a separation between the two crafts, and that your wood engraver has ceased to be a draughtsman. I shall return to this point. I wish to insist on the other first; namely, the effect of the more deliberative method on the drawing itself.

92. When the hand moves at the rate of ten lines in a second, it is indeed under the government of the muscles of the wrist and shoulder; but it cannot possibly be under the complete government of the brains. I am able to do this zigzag line evenly, because I have got the use of the hand from practice; and the faster it is done, the evenner it will be. But I have no mental authority over every line I thus lay: chance regulates them. Whereas, when I draw at the rate of two or three seconds to each line, my hand disobeys the muscles a little—the mechanical accuracy is not so great; nay, there ceases to be any *appearance* of dexterity at all. But there is, in reality, more manual skill required in the slow work than in the swift,—and all the while the hand is thoroughly under the orders of the brains. Holbein deliberately resolves, for every line, as it goes along, that it shall be *so thick, so far from the next*,—that it shall begin here, and stop there. And he is deliberately assigning the utmost quantity of meaning to it, that a line will carry.

93. It is not fair, however, to compare common work of one age with the best of another. Here is a woodcut of Tenniel's, which I think contains as high qualities as

it is possible to find in modern art.* I hold it as beyond others fine, because there is not the slightest caricature in it. No face, no attitude, is pushed beyond the degree of natural humour they would have possessed in life; and in precision of momentary expression, the drawing is equal to the art of any time, and shows power which would, if regulated, be quite adequate to producing an immortal work.

94. Why, then, is it *not* immortal? You yourselves, in compliance with whose demand it was done, forgot it the next week. It will become historically interesting; but no man of true knowledge and feeling will ever keep this in his cabinet of treasure, as he does these woodcuts of Holbein's.

The reason is that this is base coin,—alloyed gold. There *is* gold in it, but also a quantity of brass and lead—wilfully added—to make it fit for the public. Holbein's is beaten gold, seven times tried in the fire. Of which commonplace but useful metaphor the meaning here is, first, that to catch the vulgar eye a quantity of,—so-called,—light and shade is added by Tenniel. It is effective to an ignorant eye, and is ingeniously disposed; but it is entirely conventional and false, unendurable by any person who knows what chiaroscuro is.

Secondly, for one line that Holbein lays, Tenniel has a dozen. There are, for instance, a hundred and fifty-

* John Bull as Sir Oliver Surface, with Sir Peter Teazle and Joseph Surface. It appeared in *Punch*, early in 1863.

seven lines in Sir Peter Teazle's wig, without counting dots and slight cross-hatching;—but the entire face and flowing hair of Holbein's preacher are done with forty-five lines, all told.

95. Now observe what a different state of mind the two artists must be in on such conditions;—one, never in a hurry, never doing anything that he knows is wrong; never doing a line badly that he can do better; and appealing only to the feelings of sensitive persons, and the judgment of attentive ones. That is Holbein's habit of soul. What is the habit of soul of every modern engraver? Always in a hurry; everywhere doing things which he knows to be wrong—(Tenniel knows his light and shade to be wrong as well as I do)—continually doing things badly which he was able to do better; and appealing exclusively to the feelings of the dull, and the judgment of the inattentive.

Do you suppose that is not enough to make the difference between mortal and immortal art,—the original genius being supposed alike in both? *

96. Thus far of the state of the artist himself. I pass next to the relation between him and his subordinate, the woodcutter.

* In preparing these passages for the press, I feel perpetual need of qualifications and limitations, for it is impossible to surpass the humour, or precision of expressional touch, in the really golden parts of Tenniel's works; and they *may* be immortal, as representing what is best in their day.

The modern artist requires him to cut a hundred and fifty-seven lines in the wig only,—the old artist requires him to cut forty-five for the face, and long hair, altogether. The actual proportion is roughly, and on the average, about one to twenty of cost in manual labor, ancient to modern,—the twentieth part of the mechanical labour, to produce an immortal instead of a perishable work,—the twentieth part of the labour; and—which is the greatest difference of all—that twentieth part, at once less mechanically difficult, and more mentally pleasant. Mr. Otley, in his general History of Engraving, says, “The greatest difficulty in wood engraving occurs in clearing out the minute quadrangular lights;” and in any modern woodcut you will see that where the lines of the drawing cross each other to produce shade, the white interstices are cut out so neatly that there is no appearance of any jag or break in the lines; they look exactly as if they had been drawn with a pen. It is chiefly difficult to cut the pieces clearly out when the lines cross at right angles; easier when they form oblique or diamond-shaped interstices; but in any case, some half-dozen cuts, and in square crossings as many as twenty, are required to clear one interstice. Therefore if I carelessly draw six strokes with my pen across other six, I produce twenty-five interstices, each of which will need at least six—perhaps twenty, careful touches of the burin to clear out.—Say ten for an average; and I demand two hundred and fifty exquisitely precise

touches from my engraver, to render ten careless ones of mine.

97. Now I take up Punch, at his best. The whole of the left side of John Bull's waistcoat—the shadow on his knee-breeches and great-coat—the whole of the Lord Chancellor's gown, and of John Bull's and Sir Peter Teazle's complexions, are worked with finished precision

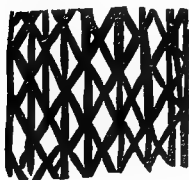


FIG. 4.

of cross-hatching. These have indeed some purpose in their texture; but in the most wanton and gratuitous way, the wall below the window is cross-hatched too, and that not with a double, but a treble line, Fig. 4.

There are about thirty of these columns, with thirty-five interstices each: approximately, 1,050—certainly not fewer—interstices to be deliberately cut clear, to get that two inches square of shadow.

Now calculate—or think enough to feel the impossibility of calculating—the number of woodcuts used daily for our popular prints, and how many men are night and day cutting 1,050 square holes to the square inch, as the occupation of their manly life. And Mrs. Beecher Stowe and the North Americans fancy they have abolished slavery!

98. The workman cannot have even the consolation of pride; for his task, even in its finest accomplishment, is not really difficult,—only tedious. When you have once got into the practice, it is as easy as lying. To cut reg-

ular holes *without* a purpose is easy enough; but to cut *irregular* holes *with* a purpose, that is difficult, for ever;—no tricks of tool or trade will give you power to do that.

The supposed difficulty—the thing which, at all events, it takes time to learn, is to cut the interstices neat, and each like the other. But is there any reason, do you suppose, for their being neat, and each like the other? So far from it, they would be twenty times prettier if they were irregular, and each different from the other. And an old woodcutter, instead of taking pride in cutting these interstices smooth and alike, resolutely cuts them rough and irregular; taking care, at the same time, never to have any more than are wanted, this being only one part of the general system of intelligent manipulation, which made so good an artist of the engraver that it is impossible to say of any standard old woodcut, whether the draughtsman engraved it himself or not. I should imagine, from the character and subtlety of the touch, that every line of the Dance of Death had been engraved by Holbein; we know it was not, and that there can be no certainty given by even the finest pieces of wood execution of anything more than perfect harmony between the designer and workman. And consider how much this harmony demands in the latter. Not that the modern engraver is unintelligent in applying his mechanical skill: very often he greatly improves the drawing; but we never could mistake his hand for Holbein's.

99. The true merit, then, of wood execution, as regards this matter of cross-hatching, is first that there be no more crossing than necessary; secondly, that all the interstices be various, and rough. You may look through the entire series of the Dance of Death without finding any cross-hatching whatever, except in a few unimportant bits of background, so rude as to need scarcely more than one touch to each interstice. Albert Durer crosses more definitely; but yet, in any fold of his drapery, every white spot differs in size from every other, and the arrangement of the whole is delightful, by the kind of variety which the spots on a leopard have.

On the other hand, where either expression or form can be rendered by the shape of the lights and darks, the old engraver becomes as careful as in an ordinary ground he is careless.

The endeavour, with your own hand, and common pen and ink, to copy a small piece of either of the two Holbein woodcuts (Figures 2 and 3) will prove this to you better than any words.

100. I said that, had Tenniel been rightly trained, there might have been the making of a Holbein, or nearly a Holbein, in him. I do not know; but I can turn from his work to that of a man who was not trained at all, and who was, without training, Holbein's equal.

Equal, in the sense that this brown stone, in my left hand, is the equal, though not the likeness, of that in my right. They are both of the same true and pure crystal;

but the one is brown with iron, and never touched by forming hand ; the other has never been in rough companionship, and has been exquisitely polished. So with these two men. The one was the companion of Erasmus and Sir Thomas More. His father was so good an artist that you cannot always tell their drawings asunder. But the other was a farmer's son ; and learned his trade in the back shops of Newcastle.

Yet the first book I asked you to get was his biography ; and in this frame are set together a drawing by Hans Holbein, and one by Thomas Bewick. I know which is most scholarly ; but I do *not* know which is best.

101. It is much to say for the self-taught Englishman ; —yet do not congratulate yourselves on his simplicity. I told you, a little while since, that the English nobles had left the history of birds to be written, and their spots to be drawn, by a printer's lad ;—but I did not tell you their farther loss in the fact that this printer's lad could have written their own histories, and drawn their own spots, if they had let him. But they had no history to be written ; and were too closely maculate to be portrayed ;—white ground in most places altogether obscured. Had there been Mores and Henrys to draw, Bewick could have drawn them ; and would have found his function. As it was, the nobles of his day left him to draw the frogs, and pigs, and sparrows—of his day, which seemed to him, in his solitude, the best types of its Nobility. No

sight or thought of beautiful things was ever granted him ;—no heroic creature, goddess-born—how much less any native Deity—ever shone upon him. To his utterly English mind, the straw of the stye, and its tenantry, were abiding truth ;—the cloud of Olympus, and its tenantry, a child's dream. He could draw a pig, but not an Aphrodite.

102. The three pieces of woodcut from his *Fables* (the two lower ones enlarged) in the opposite plate, show his utmost strength and utmost rudeness. I must endeavour to make you thoroughly understand both :—the magnificent artistic power, the flawless virtue, veracity, tenderness,—the infinite humour of the man ; and yet the difference between England and Florence, in the use they make of such gifts in their children.

For the moment, however, I confine myself to the examination of technical points ; and we must follow our former conclusions a little further.

103. Because our lines in wood must be thick, it becomes an extreme virtue in wood engraving to economize lines,—not merely, as in all other art, to save time and power, but because, our lines being necessarily blunt, we must make up our minds to do with fewer, by many, than are in the object. But is this necessarily a disadvantage ?

Absolutely, an immense disadvantage—a woodcut never can be so beautiful or good a thing as a painting, or line engraving. But in its own separate and useful way, an excellent thing, because, practised rightly, it exercises in



A



B



C

Things Celestial and Terrestrial,
as apparent to the English Mind.

the artist, and summons in you, the habit of abstraction; that is to say, of deciding what are the essential points in the things you see, and seizing these; a habit entirely necessary to strong humanity; and so natural to all humanity, that it leads, in its indolent and undisciplined states, to all the vulgar amateur's liking of sketches better than pictures. The sketch seems to put the thing for him into a concentrated and exciting form.

104. Observe, therefore, to guard you from this error, that a bad sketch is good for nothing; and that nobody can make a good sketch unless they generally are trying to finish with extreme care. But the abstraction of the essential particulars in his subject by a line-master, has a peculiar didactic value. For painting, when it is complete, leaves it much to your own judgment what to look at; and, if you are a fool, you look at the wrong thing;—but in a fine woodcut, the master says to you, “You *shall* look at this or at nothing.”

105. For example, here is a little tailpiece of Bewick's, to the fable of the Frogs and the Stork.* He is, as I told you, as stout a reformer as Holbein, or Botticelli, or Luther, or Savonarola; and, as an impartial reformer, hits right and left, at lower or upper classes, if he sees them wrong. Most frequently, he strikes at vice without reference to class; but in this vignette he strikes definitely at the degradation of the viler popular mind which is incap-

* From Bewick's *Aesop's Fables*.

able of being governed, because it cannot understand the nobleness of kingship. He has written—better than written, engraved, sure to suffer no slip of type—his legend under the drawing; so that we know his meaning:

“Set them up with a king, indeed!”

106. There is an audience of seven frogs, listening to a speaker, or croaker, in the middle; and Bewick has set himself to show in all, but especially in the speaker, essential frogginess of mind—the marsh temper. He could not have done it half so well in painting as he has done by the abstraction of wood-outline. The characteristic of a manly mind, or body, is to be gentle in temper, and firm in constitution; the contrary essence of a froggy mind and body is to be angular in temper, and flabby in constitution. I have enlarged Bewick's orator-frog for you, Plate 1, c., and I think you will feel that he is entirely expressed in those essential particulars.

This being perfectly good woodcutting, notice especially its deliberation. No scrawling or scratching, or cross-hatching, or ‘*free*’ work of any sort. Most deliberate laying down of solid lines and dots, of which you cannot change one. The real difficulty of wood engraving is to cut every one of these black lines or spaces of the exactly right shape, and not at all to cross-hatch them cleanly.

107. Next, examine the technical treatment of the pig, above. I have purposely chosen this as an example of a white object on dark ground, and the frog as a dark object on light ground, to explain to you what I mean by saying

that fine engraving regards local colour, but not light and shade. You see both frog and pig are absolutely without light and shade. The frog, indeed, casts a shadow ; but his hind leg is as white as his throat. In the pig you don't even know which way the light falls. But you know at once that the pig is white, and the frog brown or green.

108. There are, however, two pieces of chiaroscuro *implied* in the treatment of the pig. It is assumed that his curly tail would be light against the background—dark against his own rump. This little piece of heraldic quartering is absolutely necessary to solidify him. He would have been a white ghost of a pig, flat on the background, but for that alternative tail, and the bits of dark behind the ears. Secondly : Where the shade is necessary to suggest the position of his ribs, it is given with graphic and chosen points of dark, as few as possible ; not for the sake of the shade at all, but of the skin and bone.

109. That, then, being the law of refused chiaroscuro, observe further the method of outline. We said that we were to have thick lines in wood, if possible. Look what thickness of black outline Bewick has left under our pig's chin, and above his nose.

But that is not a line at all, you think ?

No ;—a modern engraver would have made it one, and prided himself on getting it fine. Bewick leaves it actually thicker than the snout, but puts all his ingenuity of touch to vary the forms, and break the extremities of his

white cuts, so that the eye may be refreshed and relieved by new forms at every turn. The group of white touches filling the space between snout and ears might be a wreath of fine-weather clouds, so studiously are they grouped and broken.

And nowhere, you see, does a single black line cross another.

Look back to Figure 4, page 74, and you will know, henceforward, the difference between good and bad wood-cutting.

110. We have also, in the lower woodcut, a notable instance of Bewick's power of abstraction. You will observe that one of the chief characters of this frog, which makes him humorous—next to his vain endeavour to get some firmness into his forefeet—is his obstinately angular hump-back. And you must feel, when you see it so marked, how important a general character of a frog it is to have a hump-back,—not at the shoulders, but the loins.

111. Here, then, is a case in which you will see the exact function that anatomy should take in art.

All the most scientific anatomy in the world would never have taught Bewick, much less you, how to draw a frog.

But when once you *have* drawn him, or looked at him, so as to know his points, it then becomes entirely interesting to find out *why* he has a hump-back. So I went myself yesterday to Professor Rolleston for a little anatomy, just as I should have gone to Professor Phillips for a little

geology; and the Professor brought me a fine little active frog; and we put him on the table, and made him jump all over it, and then the Professor brought in a charming Squelette of a frog, and showed me that he needed a projecting bone from his rump, as a bird needs it from his breast,—the one to attach the strong muscles of the hind legs, as the other to attach those of the fore-legs or wings. So that the entire leaping power of the frog is in his hump-back, as the flying power of the bird is in its breast-bone. And thus this Frog Parliament is most literally a Rump Parliament—everything depending on the hind legs, and nothing on the brains; which makes it wonderfully like some other Parliaments we know of nowadays, with Mr. Ayrton and Mr. Lowe for their æsthetic and acquisitive eyes, and a rump of Railway Directors.

112. Now, to conclude, for want of time only—I have but touched on the beginning of my subject,—understand clearly and finally this simple principle of all art, that the best is that which realizes absolutely, if possible. Here is a viper by Carpaccio: you are afraid to go near it. Here is an arm-chair by Carpaccio: you who came in late, and are standing, to my regret, would like to sit down in it. This is consummate art; but you can only have that with consummate means, and exquisitely trained and hereditary mental power.

With inferior means, and average mental power, you must be content to give a rude abstraction; but if rude abstraction *is* to be made, think what a difference there

must be between a wise man's and a fool's; and consider what heavy responsibility lies upon you in your youth, to determine, among realities, by what you will be delighted, and, among imaginations, by whose you will be led.

LECTURE IV.

THE TECHNICS OF METAL ENGRAVING.

113. WE are to-day to examine the proper methods for the technical management of the most perfect of the arms of precision possessed by the artist. For you will at once understand that a line cut by a finely-pointed instrument upon the smooth surface of metal is susceptible of the utmost fineness that can be given to the *definite* work of the human hand. In drawing with pen upon paper, the surface of the paper is slightly rough; necessarily, two points touch it instead of one, and the liquid flows from them more or less irregularly, whatever the draughtsman's skill. But you cut a metallic surface with one edge only; the furrow drawn by a skater on the surface of ice is like it on a large scale. Your surface is polished, and your line may be wholly faultless, if your hand is.

114. And because, in such material, effects may be produced which no penmanship could rival, most people, I fancy, think that a steel plate half engraves itself; that the workman has no trouble with it, compared to that of a pen draughtsman.

To test your feeling in this matter accurately, here is a

manuscript book written with pen and ink, and illustrated with flourishes and vignettes.

You will all, I think, be disposed, on examining it, to exclaim, How wonderful! and even to doubt the possibility of every page in the book being completed in the same manner. Again, here are three of my own drawings, executed with the pen, and Indian ink, when I was fifteen. They are copies from large lithographs by Prout; and I imagine that most of my pupils would think me very tyrannical if I requested them to do anything of the kind themselves. And yet, when you see in the shop windows a line engraving like this,* or this,* either of which contains, alone, as much work as fifty pages of the manuscript book, or fifty such drawings as mine, you look upon its effect as quite a matter of course,—you never say ‘how wonderful’ *that* is, nor consider how you would like to have to live, by producing anything of the same kind yourselves.

115. Yet you cannot suppose it is in reality easier to draw a line with a cutting point, not seeing the effect at all, or, if any effect, seeing a gleam of light instead of darkness, than to draw your black line at once on the white paper? You cannot really think† that there is something complacent, sympathetic, and helpful in the

* Miller’s large plate of the Grand Canal, Venice, after Turner; and Goodall’s, of Tivoli, after Turner. The other examples referred to are left in the University Galleries.

† This paragraph was not read at the lecture, time not allowing:—it is part of what I wrote on engraving some years ago, in the papers for the Art Journal, called *the Cæstus of Aglaia*.

ature of steel ; so that while a pen-and-ink sketch may always be considered an achievement proving cleverness in the sketcher, a sketch on steel comes out by a mere favour of the indulgent metal ; or that the plate is woven like a piece of pattern silk, and the pattern is developed by pasteboard cards punched full of holes ? Not so. Look close at this engraving, or take a smaller and simpler one, Turner's Mercury and Argus,—imagine it to be a drawing in pen and ink, and yourself required similarly to produce a parallel ! True, the steel point has the one advantage of not blotting, but it has tenfold or twentyfold disadvantage, in that you cannot slur, nor efface, except in a very resolute and laborious way, nor play with it, nor even see what you are doing with it at the moment, far less the effect that is to be. You must *feel* what you are doing with it, and know precisely what you have got to do ; how deep, how broad, how far apart your lines must be, etc. and etc., (a couple of lines of etceteras would not be enough to imply all you must know). But suppose the plate *were* only a pen drawing : take your pen—your finest—and just try to copy the leaves that entangle the head of Io, and her head itself ; remembering always that the kind of work required here is mere child's play compared to that of fine figure engraving. Nevertheless, take a small magnifying glass to this—count the dots and lines that gradate the nostrils and the edges of the facial bone ; notice how the light is left on the top of the head by the stopping, at its outline, of the coarse touches which form the shadows

under the leaves; examine it well, and then—I humbly ask of you—try to do a piece of it yourself! You clever sketcher—you young lady or gentleman of genius—you eye-glassed dilettante—you current writer of criticism royally plural,—I beseech you,—do it yourself; do the merely etched outline yourself, if no more. Look you,—you hold your etching needle this way, as you would a pencil, nearly; and then,—you scratch with it! it is as easy as lying. Or if you think that too difficult, take an easier piece;—take either of the light sprays of foliage that rise against the fortress on the right, pass your lens over them—look how their fine outline is first drawn, leaf by leaf; then how the distant rock is put in between, with broken lines, mostly stopping before they touch the leaf-outline; and again, I pray you, do it yourself,—if not on that scale, on a larger. Go on into the hollows of the distant rock,—traverse its thickets,—number its towers;—count how many lines there are in a laurel bush—in an arch—in a casement; some hundred and fifty, or two hundred, deliberately drawn lines, you will find, in every square quarter of an inch;—say *three thousand to the inch*,—each, with skilful intent, put in its place! and then consider what the ordinary sketcher’s work must appear, to the men who have been trained to this!

116. “But might not more have been done by three thousand lines to a square inch?” you will perhaps ask. Well, possibly. It may be with lines as with soldiers: three hundred, knowing their work thoroughly, may be

stronger than three thousand less sure of their aim. We shall have to press close home this question about numbers and purpose presently ;—it is not the question now. Suppose certain results required,—atmospheric effects, surface textures, transparencies of shade, confusions of light,—then, more could *not* be done with less. There are engravings of this modern school, of which, with respect to their particular aim, it may be said, most truly, they “cannot be better done.”

Here is one just finished,—or, at least, finished to the eyes of ordinary mortals, though its fastidious master means to retouch it ;—a quite pure line engraving, by Mr. Charles Henry Jeens ; (in calling it pure line, I mean that there are no mixtures of mezzotint or any mechanical tooling, but all is steady hand-work,) from a picture by Mr. Armytage, which, without possessing any of the highest claims to admiration, is yet free from the vulgar vices which disgrace most of our popular religious art ; and is so sweet in the fancy of it as to deserve, better than many works of higher power, the pains of the engraver to make it a common possession. It is meant to help us to imagine the evening of the day when the father and mother of Christ had been seeking him through Jerusalem : they have come to a well where women are drawing water ; St. Joseph passes on,—but the tired Madonna, leaning on the well’s margin, asks wistfully of the women if they have seen such and such a child astray. Now will you just look for a while into

the lines by which the expression of the weary and anxious face is rendered ; see how unerring they are,—how calm and clear ; and think how many questions have to be determined in drawing the most minute portion of any one,—its curve,—its thickness,—its distance from the next,—its own preparation for ending, invisibly, where it ends. Think what the precision must be in these that trace the edge of the lip, and make it look quivering with disappointment, or in these which have made the eyelash heavy with restrained tears.

117. Or if, as must be the case with many of my audience, it is impossible for you to conceive the difficulties here overcome, look merely at the draperies, and other varied substances represented in the plate ; see how silk, and linen, and stone, and pottery, and flesh, are all separated in texture, and gradated in light, by the most subtle artifices and appliances of line,—of which artifices, and the nature of the mechanical labour throughout, I must endeavour to give you to-day a more distinct conception than you are in the habit of forming. But as I shall have to blame some of these methods in their general result, and I do not wish any word of general blame to be associated with this most excellent and careful plate by Mr. Jeens, I will pass, for special examination, to one already in your reference series, which for the rest exhibits more various treatment in its combined landscape, background, and figures ; the *Belle Jardinière* of Raphael, drawn and engraved by the Baron Desmoyers.

You see, in the first place, that the ground, stones, and other coarse surfaces are distinguished from the flesh and draperies by broken and wriggled lines. Those broken lines cannot be executed with the burin, they are etched in the early states of the plate, and are a modern artifice, never used by old engravers ; partly because the older men were not masters of the art of etching, but chiefly because even those who were acquainted with it would not employ lines of this nature. They have been developed by the importance of landscape in modern engraving, and have produced some valuable results in small plates, especially of architecture. But they are entirely erroneous in principle, for the surface of stones and leaves is not broken or jagged in this manner, but consists of mossy, or blooming, or otherwise organic texture, which cannot be represented by these coarse lines ; their general consequence has therefore been to withdraw the mind of the observer from all beautiful and tender characters in foreground, and eventually to destroy the very school of landscape engraving which gave birth to them.

Considered, however, as a means of relieving more delicate textures, they are in some degree legitimate, being, in fact, a kind of chasing or jagging one part of the plate surface in order to throw out the delicate tints from the rough field. But the same effect was produced with less pains, and far more entertainment to the eye, by the older engravers, who employed purely ornamental variations of line ; thus in Plate IV., opposite page 123, the drapery is

sufficiently distinguished from the grass by the treatment of the latter as an ornamental arabesque. The grain of wood is elaborately engraved by Marc Antonio, with the same purpose, in the plate given in your Standard Series.

118. Next, however, you observe what difference of texture and force exists between the smooth, continuous lines themselves, which are all really *engraved*. You must take some pains to understand the nature of this operation.

The line is first cut lightly through its whole course, by absolute decision and steadiness of hand, which you may endeavour to imitate if you like, in its simplest phase, by drawing a circle with your compass-pen; and then, grasping your penholder so that you can push the point like a plough, describing other circles inside or outside of it, in exact parallelism with the mathematical line, and at exactly equal distances. To approach, or depart, with your point at finely gradated intervals, may be your next exercise, if you find the first unexpectedly easy.

119. When the line is thus described in its proper course, it is ploughed deeper, where depth is needed, by a second cut of the burin, first on one side, then on the other, the cut being given with gradated force so as to take away most steel where the line is to be darkest. Every line of gradated depth in the plate has to be thus cut eight or ten times over at least, with retouchings to smooth and clear all in the close. Jason has to plough his field ten-furrow deep, with his fiery oxen well in hand, all the while

When the essential lines are thus produced, in their several directions, those which have been drawn across each other, so as to give depth of shade, or richness of texture, have to be farther enriched by dots in the interstices ; else there would be a painful appearance of network everywhere ; and these dots require each four or five jags to produce them ; and each of these jags must be done with what artists and engravers alike call ‘feeling,’—the sensibility, that is, of a hand completely under mental government. So wrought, the dots look soft, and like touches of paint ; but mechanically dug in, they are vulgar and hard.

120. Now, observe, that, for every piece of shadow throughout the work, the engraver has to decide with what quantity and kind of line he will produce it. Exactly the same quantity of black, and therefore the same depth of tint in general effect, may be given with six thick lines ; or with twelve, of half their thickness ; or with eighteen, of a third of the thickness. The second six, second twelve, or second eighteen, may cross the first six, first twelve, or first eighteen, or go between them ; and they may cross at any angle. And then the third six may be put between the first six, or between the second six, or across both, and at any angle. In the network thus produced, any kind of dots may be put in the severally shaped interstices. And for any of the series of superadded lines, dots, of equivalent value in shade, may be substituted. (Some engravings are wrought in dots

altogether.) Choice infinite, with multiplication of infinity, is, at all events, to be made, for every minute space, from one side of the plate to the other.

121. The excellence of a beautiful engraving is primarily in the use of these resources to exhibit the qualities of the original picture, with delight to the eye in the method of translation; and the language of engraving, when once you begin to understand it, is, in these respects, so fertile, so ingenious, so ineffably subtle and severe in its grammar, that you may quite easily make it the subject of your life's investigation, as you would the scholarship of a lovely literature.

But in doing this, you would withdraw, and necessarily withdraw, your attention from the higher qualities of art, precisely as a grammarian, who is that, and nothing more, loses command of the matter and substance of thought. And the exquisitely mysterious mechanisms of the engraver's method have, in fact, thus entangled the intelligence of the careful draughtsmen of Europe; so that since the final perfection of this translator's power, all the men of finest patience and finest hand have stayed content with it;—the subtlest draughtsmanship has perished from the canvas,* and sought more popular praise in this labyrinth of disciplined language, and more or less

* An effort has lately been made in France, by Meissonier, Gérôme, and their school, to recover it, with marvellous collateral skill of engravers. The etching of Gérôme's Louis XIV. and Molière is one of the completest pieces of skilful mechanism ever put on metal.

dulled or degraded thought. And, in sum, I know no cause more direct or fatal, in the destruction of the great schools of European art, than the perfectness of modern line engraving.

122. This great and profoundly to be regretted influence I will prove and illustrate to you on another occasion. My object to-day is to explain the perfectness of the art itself; and above all to request you, if you will not look at pictures instead of photographs, at least not to allow the cheap merits of the chemical operation to withdraw your interest from the splendid human labour of the engraver. Here is a little vignette from Stothard, for instance, in Rogers' poems, to the lines,

"Soared in the swing, half pleased and half afraid,
'Neath sister elms, that waved their summer shade."

You would think, would you not? (and rightly,) that of all difficult things to express with crossed black lines and dots, the face of a young girl must be the most difficult. Yet here you have the face of a bright girl, radiant in light, transparent, mysterious, almost breathing,—her dark hair involved in delicate wreath and shade, her eyes full of joy and sweet playfulness,—and all this done by the exquisite order and gradation of a very few lines, which, if you will examine them through a lens, you find dividing and chequering the lip, and cheek, and chin, so strongly that you would have fancied they could only produce the effect of a grin iron mask. But the intelli

gences of order and form guide them into beauty, and inflame them with delicatest life.

123. And do you see the size of this head? About as large as the bud of a forget-me-not! Can you imagine the fineness of the little pressures of the hand on the steel, in that space, which at the edge of the almost invisible lip, fashioned its less or more of smile.

My chemical friends, if you wish ever to know anything rightly concerning the arts, I very urgently advise you to throw all your vials and washes down the gutter-trap; and if you will ascribe, as you think it so clever to do, in your modern creeds, all virtue to the sun, use that virtue through your own heads and fingers, and apply your solar energies to draw a skilful line or two, for once or twice in your life. You may learn more by trying to engrave, like Goodall, the tip of an ear, or the curl of a lock of hair, than by photographing the entire population of the United States of America,—black, white, and neutral-tint.

And one word, by the way, touching the complaints I hear at my having set you to so fine work that it hurts your eyes. You have noticed that all great sculptors—and most of the great painters of Florence—began by being goldsmiths. Why do you think the goldsmith's apprenticeship is so fruitful? Primarily, because it forces the boy to do small work, and mind what he is about. Do you suppose Michael Angelo learned his business by dashing or hitting at it? He laid the foundation of all his

after power by doing precisely what I am requiring my own pupils to do,—copying German engravings in facsimile! And for your eyes—you all sit up at night till you haven't got any eyes worth speaking of. Go to bed at half-past nine, and get up at four, and you'll see something out of them, in time.

124. Nevertheless, whatever admiration you may be brought to feel, and with justice, for this lovely workmanship,—the more distinctly you comprehend its merits, the more distinctly also will the question rise in your mind, How is it that a performance so marvellous has yet taken no rank in the records of art of any permanent or acknowledged kind? How is it that these vignettes from Stothard and Turner,* like the woodcuts from Tenniel, scarcely make the name of the engraver known; and that they never are found side by side with this older and apparently ruder art, in the cabinets of men of real judgment. The reason is precisely the same as in the case of the Tenniel

* I must again qualify the too sweeping statement of the text. I think, as time passes, some of these nineteenth century line engravings will become monumental. The first vignette of the garden, with the cut hedges and fountain, for instance, in Rogers' poems, is so consummate in its use of every possible artifice of delicate line, note the look of *tremulous* atmosphere got by the undulatory etched lines on the pavement, and the broken masses, worked with dots, of the fountain foam,) that I think it cannot but, with some of its companions, survive the refuse of its school, and become classic. I find in like manner, even with all their faults and weaknesses, the vignettes to Heyne's Virgil to be real art-possessions.

woodcut. This modern line engraving is alloyed gold. Rich in capacity, astonishing in attainment, it nevertheless admits wilful fault, and misses what it ought first to have attained. It is therefore, to a certain measure, vile in its perfection; while the older work is noble even in its failure, and classic no less in what it deliberately refuses, than in what it rationally and rightly prefers and performs.

125. Here, for instance, I have enlarged the head of one of Durer's Madonnas for you out of one of his most careful plates.* You think it very ugly. Well, so it is. Don't be afraid to think so, nor to say so. Frightfully ugly; vulgar also. It is the head, simply, of a fat Dutch girl, with all the pleasantness left out. There is not the least doubt about that. Don't let anybody force Albert Durer down your throats; nor make you expect pretty things from him. Stothard's young girl in the swing, or Sir Joshua's Age of Innocence, are in quite angelic spheres of another world, compared to this black domain of poor, laborious Albert. We are not talking of female beauty, so please you, just now, gentlemen, but of engraving. And the merit, the classical, indefeasible, immortal merit of this head of a Dutch girl with all the beauty left out, is in the fact that every line of it, as engraving, is as good as can be;—good, not with the mechanical dexterity of a watchmaker, but with the intellectual effort and sensitive-

* Plate 11th, in the Appendix taken from the engraving of the Virgin sitting in the fenced garden, with two angels crowning her.

ness of an artist who knows precisely what can be done, and ought to be attempted, with his assigned materials. He works easily, fearlessly, flexibly ; the dots are not all measured in distance; the lines not all mathematically parallel or divergent. He has even missed his mark at the mouth in one place, and leaves the mistake, frankly. But there are no petrified mistakes ; nor is the eye so accustomed to the look of the mechanical furrow as to accept it for final excellence. The engraving is full of the painter's higher power and wider perception ; it is classically perfect, because duly subordinate, and presenting for your applause only the virtues proper to its own sphere. Among these, I must now reiterate, the first of all is the *decorative* arrangement of *lines*.

126. You all know what a pretty thing a damask tablecloth is, and how a pattern is brought out by threads running one way in one space, and across in another. So, in lace, a certain delightfulness is given by the texture of meshed lines.

Similarly, on any surface of metal, the object of the engraver is, or ought to be, to cover it with lovely *lines*, forming a lacework, and including a variety of spaces, delicious to the eye.

And this is his business, primarily ; before any other matter can be thought of, his work must be ornamental. You know I told you a sculptor's business is first to cover a surface with pleasant *bosses*, whether they mean anything or not ; so an engraver's is to cover it with pleasant *lines*

whether they mean anything or not. That they should mean something, and a good deal of something, is indeed desirable afterwards; but first we must be ornamental.

127. Now if you will compare Plate II. at the beginning of this lecture, which is a characteristic example of good Florentine engraving, and represents the Planet and power of Aphrodite, with the Aphrodite of Bewick in the upper division of Plate I., you will at once understand the difference between a primarily ornamental, and a primarily realistic, style. The first requirement in the Florentine work, is that it shall be a lovely arrangement of lines; a pretty thing upon a page. Bewick *has* a secondary notion of making his vignette a pretty thing upon a page. But he is overpowered by his vigorous veracity, and bent first on giving you his idea of Venus. Quite right, he would have been, mind you, if he had been carving a statue of her on Mount Eryx; but not when he was engraving a vignette to *Æsop's* fables. To engrave well is to ornament a surface well, not to create a realistic impression. I beg your pardon for my repetitions; but the point at issue is the root of the whole business, and I *must* get it well asserted, and variously.

Let me pass to a more important example.

128. Three years ago, in the rough first arrangement of the copies in the Educational Series, I put an outline of the top of Apollo's sceptre, which, in the catalogue, was said to be probably by Baccio Bandini of Florence, for

your first real exercise ; it remains so, the olive being put first only for its mythological rank.

The series of engravings to which the plate from which that exercise is copied belongs, are part of a number, executed chiefly, I think, from early designs of Sandro Botticelli, and some in great part by his hand. He and his assistant, Baccio, worked together ; and in such harmony, that Bandini probably often does what Sandro wants, better than Sandro could have done it himself ; and, on the other hand, there is no design of Bandini's over which Sandro does not seem to have had influence.

And wishing now to show you three examples of the finest work of the old, the renaissance, and the modern schools,—of the old, I will take Baccio Bandini's *Astrologia*, Plate III., opposite. Of the renaissance, Durer's Adam and Eve. And of the modern, this head of the daughter of Herodias, engraved from Luini by Beaupré, which is as affectionately and sincerely wrought, though in the modern manner, as any plate of the old schools.

129. Now observe the progress of the feeling for light and shade in the three examples.

The first is nearly all white paper ; you think of the outline as the constructive element throughout.

The second is a vigorous piece of *white* and *black*—not of *light* and *shade*,—for all the high lights are equally white, whether of flesh, or leaves, or goat's hair.

The third is complete in chiaroscuro, as far as engraving can be.

Now the dignity and virtue of the plates is in the exactly inverse ratio of their fulness in chiaroscuro.

Bandini's is excellent work, and of the very highest school. Durer's entirely accomplished work, but of an inferior school. And Beaugrand's, excellent work, but of a vulgar and non-classical school.

And these relations of the schools are to be determined by the quality in the *lines*; we shall find that in proportion as the light and shade is neglected, the lines are studied; that those of Bandini are perfect; of Durer perfect, only with a lower perfection; but of Beaugrand, entirely faultful.

130. I have just explained to you that in modern engraving the lines are cut in clean furrow, widened, it may be, by successive cuts; but, whether it be fine or thick, retaining always, when printed, the aspect of a continuous line drawn with the pen, and entirely black throughout its whole course.

Now we may increase the delicacy of this line to any extent by simply printing it in grey colour instead of black. I obtained some very beautiful results of this kind in the later volumes of 'Modern Painters,' with Mr. Armytage's help, by using subdued purple tints; but, in any case, the line thus engraved must be monotonous in its character, and cannot be expressive of the finest qualities of form.

Accordingly, the old Florentine workmen constructed

the line *itself*, in important places, of successive minute touches, so that it became a chain of delicate links which could be opened or closed at pleasure.* If you will examine through a lens the outline of the face of this Astrology, you will find it is traced with an exquisite series of minute touches, susceptible of accentuation or change absolutely at the engraver's pleasure; and, in result, corresponding to the finest conditions of a pencil line drawing by a consummate master. In the fine plates of this period, you have thus the united powers of the pen and pencil, and both absolutely secure and multipliable.

131. I am a little proud of having independently discovered, and had the patience to carry out, this Florentine method of execution for myself, when I was a boy of thirteen. My good drawing-master had given me some copies calculated to teach me freedom of hand; the touches were rapid and vigorous,—many of them in mechanically regular zigzags, far beyond any capacity of mine to imitate in the bold way in which they were done. But I was resolved to have them, somehow; and actually facsimilied a considerable portion of the drawing in the Florentine manner, with the finest point I could cut to my

* The method was first developed in engraving designs on silver—numbers of lines being executed with dots by the punch, for variety's sake. For niello, and printing, a transverse cut was substituted for the blow. The entire style is connected with the later Roman and Byzantine method of drawing lines with the drill hole, in marble. See above, Lecture II., Section 70.

pencil, taking a quarter of an hour to forge out the likeness of one return in the zigzag which my master carried down through twenty returns in two seconds ; and so successfully, that he did not detect my artifice till I showed it him,—on which he forbade me ever to do the like again. And it was only thirty years afterwards that I found I had been quite right after all, and working like Baccio Bandini ! But the patience which carried me through that early effort, served me well through all the thirty years, and enabled me to analyze, and in a measure imitate, the method of work employed by every master ; so that, whether you believe me or not at first, you will find what I tell you of their superiority, or inferiority, to be true.

132. When lines are studied with this degree of care you may be sure the master will leave room enough for you to see them and enjoy them, and not use any at random. All the finest engravers, therefore, leave much white paper, and use their entire power on the outlines.

133. Next to them come the men of the Renaissance schools, headed by Durer, who, less careful of the beauty and refinement of the line, delight in its vigour, accuracy, and complexity. And the essential difference between these men and the moderns is that these central masters cut their line for the most part with a single furrow, giving it depth by force of hand or wrist, and retouching, *not in the furrow itself, but with others beside it.** Such

* This most important and distinctive character was pointed out to me by Mr. Bur-

work can only be done well on copper, and it can display all faculty of hand or wrist, precision of eye, and accuracy of knowledge, which a human creature can possess. But the dotted or hatched line is not used in this central style, and the higher conditions of beauty never thought of.

In the Astrology of Bandini,—and remember that the *Astrologia* of the Florentine meant what we mean by Astronomy, and much more,—he wishes you first to look at the face: the lip half open, faltering in wonder; the amazed, intense, dreaming gaze; the pure dignity of forehead, undisturbed by terrestrial thought. None of these things could be so much as attempted in Durer's method; he can engrave flowing hair, skin of animals, bark of trees, wreathings of metal-work, with the free hand; also, with laboured chiaroscuro, or with sturdy line, he can reach expressions of sadness, or gloom, or pain, or soldierly strength,—but pure beauty,—never.

134. Lastly, you have the Modern school, deepening its lines in successive cuts. The instant consequence of the introduction of this method is the restriction of curvature; you cannot follow a complex curve again with precision through its furrow. If you are a dextrous ploughman, you can drive your plough any number of times along the simple curve. But you cannot repeat again exactly the motions which cut a variable one.* You may retouch it, energize it, and deepen it in parts, but you cannot cut it

* This point will be further examined and explained in the Appendix.

all through again equally. And the retouching and engraving in parts is a living and intellectual process; but the cutting all through, equally, a mechanical one. The difference is exactly such as that between the dexterity of turning out two similar mouldings from a lathe, and carving them with the free hand, like a Pisan sculptor. And although splendid intellect, and subtlest sensibility, have been spent on the production of some modern plates, the mechanical element introduced by their manner of execution always overpowers both; nor *can any plate of consummate value ever be produced in the modern method.*

135. Nevertheless, in landscape, there are two examples in your Reference series, of insuperable skill and extreme beauty: Miller's plate, before instanced, of the Grand Canal, Venice; and E. Goodall's of the upper fall of the Tees. The men who engraved these plates might have been exquisite artists; but their patience and enthusiasm were held captive in the false system of lines, and we lost the painters; while the engravings, wonderful as they are, are neither of them worth a Turner etching, scratched in ten minutes with the point of an old fork; and the common types of such elaborate engraving are none of them worth a single frog, pig, or puppy, out of the corner of a Bewick vignette.

136. And now, I think, you cannot fail to understand clearly what you are to look for in engraving, as a separate art from that of painting. Turn back to the 'Astrologia'

as a perfect type of the purest school. She is gazing at stars, and crowned with them. But the stars are *black* instead of shining! You cannot have a more decisive and absolute proof that you must not look in engraving for *chiaroscuro*.

Nevertheless, her body is half in shade, and her left foot; and she casts a shadow, and there is a bar of shade behind her.

All these are merely so much acceptance of shade as may relieve the forms, and give value to the linear portions. The face, though turned from the light, is shadowless.

Again. Every lock of the hair is designed and set in its place with the subtlest care, but there is no lustre attempted,—no texture,—no mystery. The plumes of the wings are set studiously in their places,—they, also, lustreless. That even their filaments are not drawn, and that the broad curve embracing them ignores the anatomy of a bird's wing, are conditions of design, not execution. Of these in a future lecture.*

137. The 'Poesia,' Plate IV., opposite, is a still more severe, though not so generic, an example; its decorative foreground reducing it almost to the rank of goldsmith's ornamentation. I need scarcely point out to you that the flowing water shows neither lustre nor reflection; but notice that the observer's attention is supposed to be se

* See Appendix, Article I.

close to every dark touch of the graver that he will see the minute dark spots which indicate the sprinkled shower falling from the vase into the pool.

138. This habit of strict and calm attention, constant in the artist, and expected in the observer, makes all the difference between the art of Intellect, and of mere sensation. For every detail of this plate has a meaning, if you care to understand it. This is Poetry, sitting by the fountain of Castalia, which flows first out of a formal urn, to show that it is not artless; but the rocks of Parnassus are behind, and on the top of them—only one tree, like a mushroom with a thick stalk. You at first are inclined to say, How very absurd, to put only one tree on Parnassus! but this one tree is the Immortal Plane Tree, planted by Agamemnon, and at once connects our Poesia with the Iliad. Then, this is the hem of the robe of Poetry,—this is the divine vegetation which springs up under her feet,—this is the heaven and earth united by her power,—this is the fountain of Castalia flowing out afresh among the grass,—and these are the drops with which, out of a pitcher, Poetry is nourishing the fountain of Castalia.

All which you may find out if you happen to know anything about Castalia, or about poetry; and pleasantly think more upon, for yourself. But the poor dunces, Sandro and Baccio, feeling themselves but 'goffi nell' arte,' have no hope of telling you all this, except suggestively. They can't engrave grass of Parnassus, nor sweet springs so as to look like water; but they can make a pretty damasked

surface with ornamental leaves, and flowing lines, and so leave you something to think of—if you will.

139. ‘But a great many people won’t, and a great many more can’t; and surely the finished engravings are much more delightful, and the only means we have of giving any idea of finished pictures, out of our reach.’

Yes, all that is true; and when we examine the effects of line engraving upon taste in recent art, we will discuss these matters; for the present, let us be content with knowing what the best work is, and why it is so. Although, however, I do not now press further my cavils at the triumph of modern line engraving, I must assign to you, in few words, the reason of its recent decline. Engravers complain that photography and cheap woodcutting have ended their finer craft. No complaint can be less grounded. They themselves destroyed their own craft, by vulgarizing it. Content in their beautiful mechanism, they ceased to learn, and to feel, as artists; they put themselves under the order of publishers and print-sellers; they worked indiscriminately from whatever was put into their hands,—from Bartlett as willingly as from Turner, and from Mulready as carefully as from Raphael. They filled the windows of printsellers, the pages of gift books, with elaborate rubbish, and piteous abortions of delicate industry. They worked cheap, and cheaper,—smoothly, and more smoothly,—they got armies of assistants, and surrounded themselves with schools of mechanical tricksters, learning their stale tricks with blundering

avidity. They had fallen—before the days of photography—into providers of frontispieces for housekeepers' pocket-books. I do not know if photography itself, their redoubted enemy, has even now ousted them from that last refuge.

140. Such the fault of the engraver,—very pardonable ; scarcely avoidable,—however fatal. Fault mainly of humility. But what has *your* fault been, gentlemen ? what the patrons' fault, who have permitted so wide waste of admirable labour, so pathetic a uselessness of obedient genius ? It was yours to have directed, yours to have raised and rejoiced in, the skill, the modesty, the patience of this entirely gentle and industrious race ;—copyists with their *heart*. The common painter-copyists who encumber our European galleries with their easels and pots are, almost without exception, persons too stupid to be painters, and too lazy to be engravers. The real copyists—the men who can put their soul into another's work—are employed at home, in their narrow rooms, striving to make their good work profitable to all men. And in their submission to the public taste they are truly national servants as much as Prime Ministers are. They fulfil the demand of the nation ; what, as a people, you wish to have for possession in art, these men are ready to give you.

And what have you hitherto asked of them ?—Ramsgate Sands, and Dolly Vardens, and the Paddington Station,—these, I think, are typical of your chief demands ; the cartoons of Raphael—which you don't care to see themselves ;

and, by way of a flight into the empyrean, the Madonna di San Sisto. And, literally, there are hundreds of cities and villages in Italy in which roof and wall are blazoned with the noblest divinity and philosophy ever imagined by men; and of all this treasure, I can, as far as I know, give you not *one* example, in line engraving, by an English hand!

Well, you are in the main matter right in this. You want essentially Ramsgate Sands and the Paddington Station, because there you can see yourselves.

Make yourselves, then, worthy to be seen for ever, and let English engraving become noble as the record of English loveliness and honour.

LECTURE V.

DESIGN IN THE GERMAN SCHOOLS OF ENGRAVING.

141. By reference to the close of the preface to 'Eagle's Nest,' you will see, gentlemen, that I meant these lectures, from the first, rather to lead you to the study of the characters of two great men, than to interest you in the processes of a secondary form of art. As I draw my materials into the limited form necessary for the hour, I find my divided purpose doubly failing; and would fain rather use my time to-day in supplying the defects of my last lecture, than in opening the greater subject, which I must treat with still more lamentable inadequacy. Nevertheless, you must not think it is for want of time that I omit reference to other celebrated engravers, and insist on the special power of these two only. Many not inconsiderable reputations are founded merely on the curiosity of collectors of prints, or on partial skill in the management of processes; others, though resting on more secure bases, are still of no importance to you in the general history of art; whereas you will find the work of Holbein and Botticelli determining for you, without need of any farther range, the principal questions of moment in the relation of the Northern and Southern schools of design. Nay, a wider

method of inquiry would only render your comparison less accurate in result. It is only in Holbein's majestic range of capacity, and only in the particular phase of Teutonic life which his art adorned, that the problem can be dealt with on fair terms. We Northerners can advance no fairly comparable antagonist to the artists of the South, except at that one moment, and in that one man. Rubens cannot for an instant be matched with Tintoret, nor Memling with Lippi; while Reynolds only rivals Titian in what he learned from him. But in Holbein and Botticelli we have two men trained independently, equal in power of intellect, similar in material and mode of work, contemporary in age, correspondent in disposition. The relation between them is strictly typical of the constant aspects to each other of the Northern and Southern schools.

142. Their point of closest contact is in the art of engraving, and this art is developed entirely as the servant of the great passions which perturbed or polluted Europe in the fifteenth century. The impulses which it obeys are all new; and it obeys them with its own nascent plasticity of temper. Painting and sculpture are only modified by them; but engraving is educated.

These passions are in the main three; namely,

1. The thirst for classical literature, and the forms of proud and false tastes which arose out of it, in the position it had assumed as the enemy of Christianity.

2. The pride of science, enforcing (in the particular domain of Art) accuracy of perspective, shade, and anatomy, never before dreamed of.
3. The sense of error and iniquity in the theological teaching of the Christian Church, felt by the highest intellects of the time, and necessarily rendering the formerly submissive religious art impossible.

To-day, then, our task is to examine the peculiar characters of the Design of the Northern Schools of Engraving, as affected by these great influences.

143. I have not often, however, used the word 'design,' and must clearly define the sense in which I now use it. It is vaguely used in common art-parlance; often as if it meant merely the drawing of a picture, as distinct from its color; and in other still more inaccurate ways. The accurate and proper sense, underlying all these, I must endeavour to make clear to you.

'Design' properly signifies that power in any art-work which has a purpose other than of imitation, and which is 'designed,' composed, or separated to that end. It implies the rejection of some things, and the insistence upon others, with a given object.*

* If you paint a bottle only to amuse the spectator by showing him how like a painting may be to a bottle, you cannot be considered, in art-philosophy, as a designer. But if you paint the cork flying out of the bottle, and the contents arriving in an arch at the mouth of a re-

Let us take progressive instances. Here is a group of prettily dressed peasant children, charmingly painted by a very able modern artist—not absolutely without design, for he really wishes to show you how pretty peasant children can be, (and, in so far, is wiser and kinder than Murillo, who likes to show how ugly they can be); also, his group is agreeably arranged, and its component children carefully chosen. Nevertheless, any summer's day, near any country village, you may come upon twenty groups in an hour as pretty as this; and may see—if you have eyes—children in them twenty times prettier than these. A photograph, if it could render them perfectly, and in colour, would far excel the charm of this painting; for in it, good and clever as it is, there is nothing supernatural, and much that is sub-natural.

144. Beside this group of, in every sense of the word, 'artless' little country girls, I will now set one—in the best

cient glass, you are so far forth a designer or signer; probably meaning to express certain ultimate facts respecting, say, the hospitable disposition of the landlord of the house; but at all events representing the bottle and glass in a designed, and not merely natural, manner. Not merely natural—nay, in some sense non-natural, or supernatural. And all great artists show both this fantastic condition of mind in their work, and show that it has arisen out of a communicative or didactic purpose. They are the Sign-painters of God.

I have added this note to the lecture in copying my memoranda of it here at Assisi, June 9th, being about to begin work in the Tavern, or Tabernaculum, of the Lower Church, with its variously significant four great 'signs.'

sense of the word—‘artful’ little country girl,—a sketch by Gainsborough.

You never saw her like before. Never will again, now that Gainsborough is dead. No photography,—no science,—no industry, will touch or reach for an instant this *supernaturalness*. You will look vainly through the summer fields for such a child. “Nor up the lawn, nor by the wood,” is she. Whence do you think this marvellous charm has come? Alas! if we knew, would not we all be Gainsboroughs? This only you may practically ascertain, as surely as that a flower will die if you cut its root away, that you cannot alter a single touch in Gainsborough’s work without injury to the whole. Half a dozen spots, more or less, in the printed gowns of these other children whom I first showed you, will not make the smallest difference to them; nor a lock or two more or less in their hair, nor a dimple or two more or less in their cheeks. But if you alter one wave of the hair of Gainsborough’s girl, the child is gone. Yet the art is so subtle, that I do not expect you to believe this. It looks so instinctive, so easy, so ‘chanceux,’—the French word is better than ours. Yes, and in their more accurate sense, also, ‘Il a de la chance.’ A stronger Designer than he was with him. He could not tell you himself how the thing was done.

145. I proceed to take a more definite instance—this Greek head of the Lacinian Juno. The design or appointing of the forms now entirely prevails over the resemblance to Nature. No real hair could ever be drifted into

these wild lines, which mean the wrath of the Adriatic winds round the Cape of Storms.

And yet, whether this be uglier or prettier than Gainsborough's child—(and you know already what *I* think about it, that no Greek goddess was ever half so pretty as an English girl, of pure clay and temper,)—uglier or prettier, it is more dignified and impressive. It at least belongs to the domain of a lordlier, more majestic, more guiding, and ordaining art.

146. I will go back another five hundred years, and place an Egyptian beside the Greek divinity. The resemblance to Nature is now all but lost, the ruling law has become all. The lines are reduced to an easily counted number, and their arrangement is little more than a decorative sequence of pleasant curves cut in porphyry,—in the upper part of their contour following the outline of a woman's face in profile, over-crested by that of a hawk, on a kind of pedestal. But that the sign-engraver meant by his hawk, Immortality, and by her pedestal, the House or Tavern of Truth, is of little importance now to the passing traveller, not yet preparing to take the sarcophagus for his place of rest.

147. How many questions are suggested to us by these transitions! Is beauty contrary to law, and grace attainable only through license? What we gain in language, shall we lose in thought? and in what we add of labour, more and more forget its ends?

Not so.

Look at this piece of Sandro's work, the Libyan Sibyl.*

It is as ordered and normal as the Egyptian's;—as graceful and facile as Gainsborough's. It retains the majesty of old religion; it is invested with the joy of newly-awakened childhood.

Mind, I do not expect you—do not wish you—to enjoy Botticelli's dark engraving as much as Gainsborough's aerial sketch; for due comparison of the men, painting should be put beside painting. But there is enough even in this copy of the Florentine plate to show you the junction of the two powers in it—of prophecy, and delight.

148. Will these two powers, do you suppose, be united in the same manner in the contemporary Northern art? That Northern school is my subject to day; and yet I give you, as type of the intermediate condition between Egypt and England—not Holbein, but Botticelli. I am obliged to do this; because in the Southern art, the religious temper remains unconquered by the doctrines of the Reformation. Botticelli was—what Luther wished to be, but could not be—a reformer still believing in the Church: his mind is at peace; and his art, therefore, can pursue the delight of beauty, and yet remain prophetic. But it was far otherwise in Germany. There the Reformation of manners became the destruction of faith; and art therefore, not a prophecy, but a protest. It is the chief work

of the greatest Protestant who ever lived,* which I ask you to study with me to-day.

149. I said that the power of engraving had developed itself during the introduction of three new—(practically and vitally new, that is to say)—elements, into the minds of men : elements which briefly may be expressed thus :

1. Classicism, and Literary Science.
2. Medicine, and Physical Science.†
3. Reformation, and Religious Science.

And first of Classicism.

You feel, do not you, in this typical work of Gainsborough's, that his subject as well as his picture is 'artless' in a lovely sense ;—nay, not only artless, but ignorant, and unscientific, in a beautiful way ? You would be afterwards remorseful, I think, and angry with yourself—seeing the effect produced on her face—if you were to ask this little lady to spell a very long word ? Also, if you

* I do not mean the greatest teacher of reformed faith ; but the greatest protestant against faith unreformed.

† It has become the permitted fashion among modern mathematicians, chemists, and apothecaries, to call themselves 'scientific men,' as opposed to theologians, poets, and artists. They know their sphere to be a separate one ; but their ridiculous notion of its being a peculiarly scientific one ought not to be allowed in our Universities. There is a science of Morals, a science of History, a science of Grammar, a science of Music, and a science of Painting ; and all these are quite beyond comparison higher fields for human intellect, and require accuracies of intenser observation, than either chemistry, electricity, or geology.

wished to know how many times the sevens go in forty-nine, you would perhaps wisely address yourself elsewhere. On the other hand, you do not doubt that *this* lady* knows very well how many times the sevens go in forty-nine, and is more Mistress of Arts than any of us are Masters of them.

150. You have then, in the one case, a beautiful simplicity, and a blameless ignorance; in the other, a beautiful artfulness, and a wisdom which you do not dread,—or, at least, even though dreading, love. But you know also that we may remain in a hateful and culpable ignorance; and, as I fear too many of us in competitive effort feel, become possessed of a hateful knowledge.

Ignorance, therefore, is not evil absolutely; but, innocent, may be loveable.

Knowledge also is not good absolutely; but, guilty, may be hateful.

So, therefore, when I now repeat my former statement, that the first main opposition between the Northern and Southern schools is in the simplicity of the one, and the scholarship of the other, that statement may imply sometimes the superiority of the North, and sometimes of the South. You may have a heavenly simplicity opposed to a hellish (that is to say, a lustful and arrogant) scholarship; or you may have a barbarous and presumptuous ignorance opposed to a divine and disciplined wisdom. Ignorance

* The Cumæan Sibyl, Plate VII., Lecture VI.

opposed to learning in both cases ; but evil to good, as the case may be.

151. For instance : the last time I was standing before Raphael's arabesques in the Loggias of the Vatican, I wrote down in my pocket-book the description, or, more modestly speaking, the inventory, of the small portion of that infinite wilderness of sensual fantasy which happened to be opposite me. It consisted of a woman's face, with serpents for hair, and a virgin's breasts, with stumps for arms, ending in blue butterflies' wings, the whole changing at the waist into a goat's body, which ended below in an obelisk upside-down, to the apex at the bottom of which were appended, by graceful chains, an altar, and two bunches of grapes.

Now you know in a moment, by a glance at this 'design'—beautifully struck with free hand, and richly gradated in colour,—that the master was familiar with a vast range of art and literature: that he knew all about Egyptian sphinxes, and Greek Gorgons; about Egyptian obelisks, and Hebrew altars; about Hermes, and Venus, and Bacchus, and satyrs, and goats, and grapes.

You know also—or ought to know, in an instant,—that all this learning has done him no good ; that he had better have known nothing than any of these things, since they were to be used by him only to such purpose ; and that his delight in armless breasts, legless trunks, and obelisks upside-down, has been the last effort of his expiring sensation, in the grasp of corrupt and altogether victorious

Death. And you have thus, in Gainsborough as compared with Raphael, a sweet, sacred, and living simplicity, set against an impure, profane, and paralyzed knowledge.

152. But, next, let us consider the reverse conditions.

Let us take instance of contrast between faultful and treacherous ignorance, and divinely pure and fruitful knowledge.

In the place of honour at the end of one of the rooms of your Royal Academy—years ago—stood a picture by an English Academician, announced as a representation of Moses sustained by Aaron and Hur, during the discomfiture of Amalek. In the entire range of the Pentateuch, there is no other scene (in which the visible agents are mortal only) requiring so much knowledge and thought to reach even a distant approximation to the probabilities of the fact. One saw in a moment that the painter was both powerful and simple, after a sort; that he had really sought for a vital conception, and had originally and earnestly read his text, and formed his conception. And one saw also in a moment that he had chanced upon this subject, in reading or hearing his Bible, as he might have chanced on a dramatic scene accidentally in the street. That he knew nothing of the character of Moses,—nothing of his law,—nothing of the character of Aaron, nor of the nature of a priesthood,—nothing of the meaning of the event which he was endeavouring to represent, of the temper in which it would have been transacted by its agents, or of its relations to modern life.

153. On the contrary, in the fresco of the earlier scenes in the life of Moses, by Sandro Botticelli, you know—not ‘in a moment,’ for the knowledge of knowledge cannot be so obtained; but in proportion to the discretion of your own reading, and to the care you give to the picture, you *may* know,—that here is a sacredly guided and guarded learning; here a Master indeed, at whose feet you may sit safely, who can teach you, better than in words, the significance of both Moses’ law and Aaron’s ministry; and not only these, but, if he chose, could add to this an exposition as complete of the highest philosophies both of the Greek nation, and of his own; and could as easily have painted, had it been asked of him, Draco, or Numa, or Justinian, as the herdsman of Jethro.

154. It is rarely that we can point to an opposition between faultful, because insolent, ignorance, and virtuous, because gracious, knowledge, so direct, and in so parallel elements, as in this instance. In general, the analysis is much more complex. It is intensely difficult to indicate the mischief of involuntary and modest ignorance, calamitous only in a measure; fruitful in its lower field, yet sorrowfully condemned to that lower field—not by sin, but fate.

When first I introduced you to Bewick, we closed our too partial estimate of his entirely magnificent powers with one sorrowful concession—he could draw a pig, but not a Venus.

Eminently he could so, because—which is still more

sorrowfully to be conceded—he liked the pig best. I have put now in your educational series a whole galaxy of pigs by him; but, hunting all the fables through, I find only one Venus, and I think you will all admit that she is an unsatisfactory Venus.* There is honest simplicity here; but you regret it; you miss something that you find in Holbein, much more in Botticelli. You see in a moment that this man knows nothing of Sphinxes, or Muses, or Graces, or Aphrodites; and, besides, that, knowing nothing, he would have no liking for them even if he saw them; but much prefers the style of a well-to-do English house-keeper with corkscrew curls, and a portly person.

155. You miss something, I said, in Bewick which you find in Holbein. But do you suppose Holbein himself, or any other Northern painter, could wholly quit himself of the like accusations? I told you, in the second of these lectures, that the Northern temper, refined from savageness, and the Southern, redeemed from decay, met, in Florence. Holbein and Botticelli are the purest types of the two races. Holbein is a civilized boor; Botticelli a reanimate Greek. Holbein was polished by companionship with scholars and kings, but remains always a burgher of Augsburg in essential nature. Bewick and he are alike in temper; only the one is untaught, the other perfectly taught. But Botticelli *needs* no teaching. He is, by his birth, scholar and gentleman to the heart's core. Chris-

* Lecture III., p. 87.

tianity itself can only inspire him, not refine him. He is as tried gold chased by the jeweller,—the roughest part of him is the outside.

Now how differently must the newly recovered scholastic learning tell upon these two men. It is all out of Holbein's way; foreign to his nature, useless at the best, probably cumbrous. But Botticelli receives it as a child in later years recovers the forgotten dearness of a nursery tale; and is more himself, and again and again himself, as he breathes the air of Greece, and hears, in his own Italy, the lost voice of the Sibyl murmur again by the Avernus Lake.

156. It is not, as we have seen, every one of the Southern race who can thus receive it. But it graces them all; is at once a part of their being; destroys them, if it is to destroy, the more utterly because it so enters into their natures. It destroys Raphael; but it graces him, and is a part of him. It all but destroys Mantegna; but it graces him. And it does not hurt Holbein, just because it does *not* grace him—never is for an instant a part of him. It is with Raphael as with some charming young girl who has a new and beautifully made dress brought to her, which entirely becomes her,—so much, that in a little while, thinking of nothing else, she becomes *it*; and is only the decoration of her dress. But with Holbein it is as if you brought the same dress to a stout farmer's daughter who was going to dine at the Hall; and begged her to put it on that she might not discredit the company.

She puts it on to please you ; looks entirely ridiculous in it, but is not spoiled by it,—remains herself, in spite of it.

157. You probably have never noticed the extreme awkwardness of Holbein in wearing this new dress ; you would the less do so because his own people think him all the finer for it, as the farmer's wife would probably think her daughter. Dr. Woltmann, for instance, is enthusiastic in praise of the splendid architecture in the background of his Annunciation. A fine mess it must have made in the minds of simple German maidens, in their notion of the Virgin at home ! I cannot show you this Annunciation ; but I have under my hand one of Holbein's Bible cuts, of the deepest seriousness and import—his illustration of the Canticles, showing the Church as the bride of Christ.

You could not find a subject requiring more tenderness, purity, or dignity of treatment. In this maid, symbolizing the Church, you ask for the most passionate humility, the most angelic beauty : “ Behold, thou art fair, my dove.” Now here is Holbein's ideal of that fairness ; here is his “ Church as the Bride.”

I am sorry to associate this figure in your minds, even for a moment, with the passages it is supposed to illustrate ; but the lesson is too important to be omitted. Remember, Holbein represents the temper of Northern Reformation. He has all the nobleness of that temper, but also all its baseness. He represents, indeed, the revolt of German truth against Italian lies ; but he represents also the revolt

of German animalism against Hebrew imagination. This figure of Holbein's is half-way from Solomon's mystic bride, to Rembrandt's wife, sitting on his knee while he drinks.



But the key of the question is not in this. Florentine animalism has at this time, also, enough to say for itself. But Florentine animalism, at this time, feels the joy of a gentleman, not of a churl. And a Florentine, whatever he does,—be it virtuous or sinful, chaste or lascivious, severe or extravagant,—does it with a grace.

158. You think, perhaps, that Holbein's Solomon's bride is so ungraceful chiefly because she is overdressed, and has too many feathers and jewels. No; a Florentine would have put any quantity of feathers and jewels on her, and yet never lost her grace. You shall see him do it, and that to a fantastic degree, for I have an example under

my hand. Look back, first, to Bewick's Venus (Lect. III., p. 87). You can't accuse her of being overdressed. She complies with every received modern principle of taste. Sir Joshua's precept that drapery should be "drapery, and nothing more," is observed more strictly even by Bewick than by Michael Angelo. If the absence of decoration could exalt the beauty of his Venus, here had been her perfection.

Now look back to Plate II. (Lect. IV.), by Sandro; Venus in her planet, the ruling star of Florence. Anything more grotesque in conception, more unrestrained in fancy of ornament, you cannot find, even in the final days of the Renaissance. Yet Venus holds her divinity through all; she will become majestic to you as you gaze; and there is not a line of her chariot wheels, of her buskins, or of her throne, which you may not see was engraved by a gentleman.

159. Again, Plate V., opposite, is a facsimile of another engraving of the same series—the Sun in Leo. It is even more extravagant in accessories than the Venus. You see the Sun's epaulettes before you see the sun; the spiral scrolls of his chariot, and the black twisted rays of it, might, so far as types of form only are considered, be a design for some modern court-dress star, to be made in diamonds. And yet all this wild ornamentation is, if you will examine it, more purely Greek in spirit than the Apollo Belvidere.

You know I have told you, again and again, that the

soul of Greece is her veracity ; that what to other nations were fables and symbolisms, to her became living facts—living gods. The fall of Greece was instant when her gods again became fables. The Apollo Belvidere is the work of a sculptor to whom Apollonism is merely an elegant idea on which to exhibit his own skill. He does not himself feel for an instant that the handsome man in the unintelligible attitude,* with drapery hung over his left arm, as it would be hung to dry over a clothes-line, is the Power of the Sun. But the Florentine believes in Apollo with his whole mind, and is trying to explain his strength in every touch.

For instance ; I said just now, “ You see the sun’s epaulettes before the sun.” Well, *don’t* you, usually, as it rises ? Do you not continually mistake a luminous cloud for it, or wonder where it is, behind one ? Again, the face of the Apollo Belvidere is agitated by anxiety, passion, and pride. Is the sun’s likely to be so, rising on the evil and the good ? This Prince sits crowned and calm : look at the quiet fingers of the hand holding the sceptre, —at the restraint of the reins merely by a depression of the wrist.

* I read somewhere, lately, a new and very ingenious theory about the attitude of the Apollo Belvidere, proving, to the author’s satisfaction, that the received notion about watching the arrow was all a mistake. The paper proved, at all events, one thing—namely, the statement in the text. For an attitude which has been always hitherto taken to mean one thing, and is plausibly asserted now to mean another, must be in itself unintelligible.

160. You have to look carefully for those fingers holding the sceptre, because the hand—which a great anatomist would have made so exclusively interesting—is here confused with the ornamentation of the arm of the chariot on which it rests. But look what the ornamentation is;—fruit and leaves, abundant, in the mouth of a cornucopia. A quite vulgar and meaningless ornament in ordinary renaissance work. Is it so here, think you? Are not the leaves and fruits of earth in the Sun's hand?*

You thought, perhaps, when I spoke just now of the action of the right hand, that less than a depression of the wrist would stop horses such as those. You fancy Botticelli drew them so, because he had never seen a horse; or because, able to draw fingers, he could not draw hoofs! How fine it would be to have, instead, a prancing four-in-hand, in the style of Piccadilly on the Derby-day, or at least horses like the real Greek horses of the Parthenon!

Yes; and if they had had real ground to trot on, the Florentine would have shown you he knew how they should trot. But these have to make their way up the hill-side of other lands. Look to the example in your standard series, Hermes Eriophoros. You will find his motion among clouds represented precisely in this labouring, failing, half-kneeling attitude of limb. These forms, toiling up through the rippled sands of heaven, are—not horses;

* It may be asked, why not corn also? Because that belongs to Ceres, who is equally one of the great gods.

—they are clouds themselves, *like* horses, but only a little like. Look how their hoofs lose themselves, buried in the ripples of cloud; it makes one think of the quicksands of Morecambe Bay.

And their tails—what extraordinary tufts of tails, ending in points! Yes; but do you not see, nearly joining with them, what is not a horse tail at all; but a flame of fire, kindled at Apollo's knee? All the rest of the radiance about him shoots *from* him. But this is rendered *up* to him. As the fruits of the earth are in one of his hands, its fire is in the other. And all the warmth, as well as all the light of it, are his.

We had a little natural philosophy, gentlemen, as well as theology, in Florence, once upon a time.

161. Natural philosophy, and also natural art, for in this the Greek reanimate was a nobler creature than the Greek who had died. His art had a wider force and warmer glow. I have told you that the first Greeks were distinguished from the barbarians by their simple humanity; the second Greeks—these Florentine Greeks reanimate—are human more strongly, more deeply, leaping from the Byzantine death at the call of Christ, “Loose him, and let him go.” And there is upon them at once the joy of resurrection, and the solemnity of the grave.

162. Of this resurrection of the Greek, and the form of the tomb he had been buried in “those four days,” I have to give you some account in the last lecture. I will only to-day show you an illustration of it which brings us back

to our immediate question as to the reasons why Northern art could not accept classicism. When, in the closing lecture of *Aratra Pentelici*, I compared Florentine with Greek work, it was to point out to you the eager passions of the first as opposed to the formal legalism and proprieties of the other. Greek work, I told you, while truthful, was also restrained, and never but under majesty of law; while Gothic work was true, in the perfect law of Liberty or Franchise. And now I give you in facsimile (Plate VI.) the two Aphrodites thus compared—the Aphrodite *Thalassia* of the Tyrrhene seas, and the Aphrodite *Urania* of the Greek skies. You may not at first like the Tuscan best; and why she is the best, though both are noble, again I must defer explaining to next lecture. But now turn back to Bewick's *Venus*, and compare her with the Tuscan *Venus of the Stars*, (Plate II.); and then here, in Plate VI., with the Tuscan *Venus of the Seas*, and the Greek *Venus of the Sky*. Why is the English one vulgar? What is it, in the three others, which makes them, if not beautiful, at least refined?—every one of them ‘designed’ and drawn, indisputably, by a gentleman?

I never have been so puzzled by any subject of analysis as, for these ten years, I have been by this. Every answer I give, however plausible it seems at first, fails in some way, or in some cases. But there is the point for you, more definitely put, I think, than in any of my former books;—at present, for want of time, I must leave it to your own thoughts.

163. II. The second influence under which engraving developed itself, I said, was that of medicine and the physical sciences. Gentlemen, the most audacious, and the most valuable, statement which I have yet made to you on the subject of practical art, in these rooms, is that of the evil resulting from the study of anatomy. It is a statement so audacious, that not only for some time I dared not make it to you, but for ten years, at least, I dared not make it to myself. I saw, indeed, that whoever studied anatomy was in a measure injured by it; but I kept attributing the mischief to secondary causes. It *can't* be this drink itself that poisons them, I said always. This drink is medicinal and strengthening: I see that it kills them, but it must be because they drink it cold when they have been hot, or they take something else with it that changes it into poison. The drink itself *must* be good. Well, gentlemen, I found out the drink itself to be poison at last, by the breaking of my choicest Venice glass. I could not make out what it was that had killed Tintoret, and laid it long to the charge of chiaroscuro. It was only after my thorough study of his Paradise, in 1870, that I gave up this idea, finding the chiaroscuro, which I had thought exaggerated was, in all original and undarkened passages, beautiful and most precious. And then at last I got hold of the true clue: "Il disegno di Michel Agnolo." And the moment I had dared to accuse that, it explained everything; and I saw that the betraying demons of Italian art, led on by Michael Angelo, had been, not pleasure, but

knowledge; not indolence, but ambition; and not love, but horror.

164. But when first I ventured to tell you this, I did not know, myself, the fact of all most conclusive for its confirmation. It will take me a little while to put it before you in its total force, and I must first ask your attention to a minor point. In one of the smaller rooms of the Munich Gallery is Holbein's painting of St. Margaret and St. Elizabeth of Hungary,—standard of his early religious work. Here is a photograph from the St. Elizabeth; and, in the same frame, a French lithograph of it. I consider it one of the most important pieces of comparison I have arranged for you, showing you at a glance the difference between true and false sentiment. Of that difference, generally, we cannot speak to-day, but one special result of it you are to observe;—the omission, in the French drawing, of Holbein's daring representation of disease, which is one of the vital honours of the picture. Quite one of the chief strengths of St. Elizabeth, in the Roman Catholic view, was in the courage of her dealing with disease, chiefly leprosy. Now observe, I say *Roman Catholic* view, very earnestly just now; I am not at all sure that it is so in a Catholic view—that is to say, in an eternally Christian and Divine view. And this doubt, very nearly now a certainty, only came clearly into my mind the other day after many and many a year's meditation on it. I had read with great reverence all the beautiful stories about Christ's appearing as a leper, and the like; and had often

pitied and rebuked myself alternately for my intense dislike and horror of disease. I am writing at this moment within fifty yards of the grave of St. Francis, and the story of the likeness of his feelings to mine had a little comforted me, and the tradition of his conquest of them again humiliated me; and I was thinking very gravely of this, and of the parallel instance of Bishop Hugo of Lincoln, always desiring to do service to the dead, as opposed to my own unmitigated and Louis-Quinze-like horror of funerals;—when by chance, in the cathedral of Palermo, a new light was thrown for me on the whole matter.

165. I was drawing the tomb of Frederick II., which is shut off by a grating from the body of the church; and I had, in general, quite an unusual degree of quiet and comfort at my work. But sometimes it was paralyzed by the unconscious interference of one of the men employed in some minor domestic services about the church. When he had nothing to do, he used to come and seat himself near my grating, not to look at my work, (the poor wretch had no eyes, to speak of,) nor in any way meaning to be troublesome; but there was his habitual seat. His nose had been carried off by the most loathsome of diseases; there were two vivid circles of scarlet round his eyes; and as he sat, he announced his presence every quarter of a minute (if otherwise I could have forgotten it) by a peculiarly disgusting, loud, and long expectoration. On the second or third day, just as I had forced myself into some forgetfulness of him, and was hard at my work, I was

startled from it again by the bursting out of a loud and cheerful conversation close to me; and on looking round, saw a lively young fledgling of a priest, seventeen or eighteen years old, in the most eager and spirited chat with the man in the chair. He talked, laughed, and spat, himself, companionably, in the merriest way, for a quarter of an hour; evidently without feeling the slightest disgust, or being made serious for an instant, by the aspect of the destroyed creature before him.

166. His own face was simply that of the ordinary vulgar type of thoughtless young Italians, rather beneath than above the usual standard; and I was certain, as I watched him, that he was not at all my superior, but very much my inferior, in the coolness with which he beheld what was to me so dreadful. I was positive that he could look this man in the face, precisely because he could *not* look, discerningly, at any beautiful or noble thing; and that the reason I dared not, was because I had, spiritually, as much better eyes than the priest, as bodily, than his companion.

Having got so much of clear evidence given me on the matter, it was driven home for me a week later, as I landed on the quay of Naples. Almost the first thing that presented itself to me was the sign of a travelling theatrical company, displaying the principal scene of the drama to be enacted on their classical stage. Fresh from the theatre of Taormina, I was curious to see the subject of the Neapolitan popular drama. It was the capture, by

the police, of a man and his wife who lived by boiling children. One section of the police was coming in, armed to the teeth, through the passage; another section of the police, armed to the teeth, and with high feathers in its caps, was coming up through a trap-door. In fine dramatic unconsciousness to the last moment, like the clown in a pantomime, the child-boiler was represented as still industriously chopping up a child, pieces of which, ready for the pot, lay here and there on the table in the middle of the picture. The child-boiler's wife, however, just as she was taking the top off the pot to put the meat in, had caught a glimpse of the foremost policeman, and stopped, as much in rage as in consternation.

167. Now it is precisely the same feeling, or want of feeling, in the lower Italian (nor always in the lower classes only) which makes him demand the kind of subject for his secular drama; and the Crucifixion and Pieta for his religious drama. The only part of Christianity he can enjoy is its horror; and even the saint or saintess are not always denying themselves severely, either by the contemplation of torture, or the companionship with disease.

Nevertheless, we must be cautious, on the other hand, to allow full value to the endurance, by tender and delicate persons, of what is really loathsome or distressful to them in the service of others; and I think this picture of Holbein's indicative of the exact balance and rightness of his own mind in this matter, and therefore of his power to conceive a true saint also. He had to represent St. Cath-

erine's chief effort ;—he paints her ministering to the sick, and, among them, is a leper ; and finding it thus his duty to paint leprosy, he courageously himself studies it from the life. Not to insist on its horror ; but to assert it, to the needful point of fact, which he does with medical accuracy.

Now here is just a case in which science, in a subordinate degree, is really required for a spiritual and moral purpose. And you find Holbein does not shrink from it even in this extreme case in which it is most painful.

168. If, therefore, you *do* find him in other cases not using it, you may be sure he knew it to be unnecessary.

Now it may be disputable whether in order to draw a living Madonna, one need to know how many ribs she has ; but it would have seemed indisputable that in order to draw a skeleton, one must know how many ribs *it* has.

Holbein is par excellence the draughtsman of skeletons. His painted Dance of Death was, and his engraved Dance of Death is, principal of such things, without any comparison or denial. He draws skeleton after skeleton, in every possible gesture ; but never so much as counts their ribs ! He neither knows nor cares how many ribs a skeleton has. There are always enough to rattle.

Monstrous, you think, in impudence,—Holbein for his carelessness, and I for defending him ! Nay, I triumph in him ; nothing has ever more pleased me than this grand negligence. Nobody wants to know how many ribs a skeleton has, any more than how many bars a gridiron has,

so long as the one can breathe, and the other broil; and still less, when the breath and the fire are both out.

169. But is it only of the bones, think you, that Holbein is careless? * Nay, incredible though it may seem to you, —but, to me, explanatory at once of much of his excellence,—he did not know anatomy at all! I told you in my Preface, already quoted, Holbein studies the face first, the body secondarily; but I had no idea, myself, how completely he had refused the venomous science of his day. I showed you a dead Christ of his, long ago. Can you match it with your academy drawings, think you? And yet he did not, and would not, know anatomy. *He* would not; but Durer would, and did:—went hotly into it—wrote books upon it, and upon ‘proportions of the human body,’ etc., etc., and all your modern recipes for painting flesh. How did his studies prosper his art?

People are always talking of his Knight and Death, and his Melancholia, as if those were his principal works. They are his characteristic ones, and show what he might have been, *without* his anatomy; but they were mere by-play compared to his Greater Fortune, and Adam and Eve. Look at these. Here is his full energy displayed; here are both male and female forms drawn with perfect knowledge of their bones and muscles, and modes of action and digestion,—and I hope you are pleased.

* Or inventive! See Woltmann, p. 267. “The shin-bone, or the lower part of the arm, exhibit only one bone, while the upper arm and thigh are often allowed the luxury of two”!

But it is not anatomy only that Master Albert studies. He has a taste for optics also ; and knows all about refraction and reflection. What with his knowledge of the skull inside, and the vitreous lens outside, if any man in the world is to draw an eye, here's the man to do it, surely ! With a hand which can give lessons to John Bellini, and a care which would fain do all so that it can't be done better, and acquaintance with every crack in the cranium, and every humour in the lens,—if we can't draw an eye, we should just like to know who can ! thinks Albert.

So having to engrave the portrait of Melancthon, instead of looking at Melancthon, as ignorant Holbein would have been obliged to do,—wise Albert looks at the room window ; and finds it has four cross-bars in it, and knows scientifically that the light on Melancthon's eye must be a reflection of the window with its four bars—and engraves it so, accordingly ; and who shall dare to say, now, it isn't like Melancthon ?

Unfortunately, however, it isn't, nor like any other person in his senses ; but like a madman looking at somebody who disputes his hobby. While in this drawing of Holbein's, where a dim gray shadow leaves a mere crumb of white paper,—accidentally it seems, for all the fine scientific reflection,—behold, it is an eye indeed, and of a noble creature.

170. What is the reason ? do you ask me ; and is all the common teaching about generalization of details true, then ?

No ; not a syllable of it is true. Holbein is right, not because he draws more generally, but more truly, than Durer. Durer draws what he knows is there ; but Holbein, only what he sees. And, as I have told you often before, the really scientific artist is he who not only asserts bravely what he *does* see, but confesses honestly what he does *not*. You must not draw all the hairs in an eyelash ; not because it is sublime to generalize them, but because it is impossible to see them. How many hairs there are, a sign painter or anatomist may count ; but how few of them you can see, it is only the utmost masters, Carpaccio, Tintoret, Reynolds, and Velasquez, who count, or know.

171. Such was the effect, then, of his science upon Durer's ideal of beauty, and skill in portraiture. What effect had it on the temper and quantity of his work, as compared with poor ignorant Holbein's ! You have only three portraits, by Durer, of the great men of his time, and those bad ones ; while he toils his soul out to draw the hoofs of satyrs, the bristles of swine, and the distorted aspects of base women and vicious men.

What, on the contrary, has ignorant Holbein done for you ? Shakspeare and he divide between them, by word and look, the Story of England under Henry and Elizabeth.

172. Of the effect of science on the art of Mantegna and Marc Antonio, (far more deadly than on Durer's,) I must tell you in a future lecture ;—the effect of it on their minds, I must partly refer to now, in passing to the third

head of my general statement—the influence of new Theology. For Durer and Mantegna, chiefly because of their science, forfeited their place, not only as painters of men, but as servants of God. Neither of them has left one completely noble or completely didactic picture; while Holbein and Botticelli, in consummate pieces of art, led the way before the eyes of all men, to the purification of their Church and land.

173. III. But the need of reformation presented itself to these two men last named on entirely different terms.

To Holbein, when the word of the Catholic Church proved false, and its deeds bloody; when he saw it selling permission of sin in his native Augsburg, and strewing the ashes of its enemies on the pure Alpine waters of Constance, what refuge was there for *him* in more ancient religion? Shall he worship Thor again, and mourn over the death of Balder? He reads Nature in her desolate and narrow truth, and she teaches him the Triumph of Death.

But, for Botticelli, the grand gods are old, are immortal. The priests may have taught falsely the story of the Virgin;—did they not also lie, in the name of Artemis, at Ephesus;—in the name of Aphrodite, at Cyprus?—but shall, therefore, Chastity or Love be dead, or the full moon paler over Arno? Saints of Heaven and Gods of Earth!—shall *these* perish because vain men speak evil of them? Let *us* speak good for ever, and grave, as on the rock, for



THE CHILD'S BEDTIME.

(Fig. 5.) Fac-simile from Holbein's woodcut.

ages to come, the glory of Beauty, and the triumph of Faith.

174. Holbein had bitterer task.

Of old, the one duty of the painter had been to exhibit the virtues of this life, and hopes of the life to come. Holbein had to show the vices of this life, and to obscure the hope of the future. "Yes, we walk through the valley of the shadow of death, and fear all evil, for Thou art not with us, and Thy rod and Thy staff comfort us not." He does not choose this task. It is thrust upon him,—just as fatally as the burial of the dead is in a plague-struck city. These are the things he sees, and must speak. He will not become a better artist thereby; no drawing of supreme beauty, or beautiful things, will be possible to him. Yet we cannot say he ought to have done anything else, nor can we praise him specially in doing this. It is his fate; the fate of all the bravest in that day.

175. For instance, there is no scene about which a shallow and feeble painter would have been more sure to adopt the commonplaces of the creed of his time than the death of a child,—chiefly, and most of all, the death of a country child,—a little thing fresh from the cottage and the field. Surely for such an one, angels will wait by its sick bed, and rejoice as they bear its soul away; and over its shroud flowers will be strewn, and the birds will sing by its grave. So your common sentimentalist would think, and paint. Holbein sees the facts, as they verily are, up to the point when vision ceases. He speaks, then no more.

The country labourer's cottage—the rain coming through its roof, the clay crumbling from its partitions, the fire lighted with a few chips and sticks on a raised piece of the mud floor,—such dais as can be contrived, for use, not for honour. The damp wood sputters; the smoke, stopped by the roof, though the rain is not, coils round again, and down. But the mother can warm the child's supper of bread and milk so—holding the pan by the long handle; and on mud floor though it be, they are happy,—she, and her child, and its brother,—if only they could be left so. They shall not be left so: the young thing must leave them—will never need milk warmed for it any more. It would fain stay,—sees no angels—feels only an icy grip on its hand, and that it cannot stay. Those who loved it shriek and tear their hair in vain, amazed in grief. ‘Oh, little one, must you lie out in the fields then, not even under this poor torn roof of thy mother's to-night?’

176. Again: there was not in the old creed any subject more definitely and constantly insisted on than the death of a miser. He had been happy, the old preachers thought, till then: but his hour has come; and the black covetousness of hell is awake and watching; the sharp harpy claws will clutch his soul out of his mouth, and scatter his treasure for others. So the commonplace preacher and painter taught. Not so Holbein. The devil want to snatch his soul, indeed! Nay, he never *had* a soul, but of the devil's giving. His misery to begin on his deathbed! Nay, he had never an unmiserable hour of life. The fiend

is with him now,—a paltry, abortive fiend, with no breath even to blow hot with. He supplies the hell-blast *with a machine*. It is winter, and the rich man has his furred cloak and cap, thick and heavy; the beggar, bareheaded to beseech him, skin and rags hanging about him together, touches his shoulder, but all in vain; there is other business in hand. More haggard than the beggar himself, wasted and palsied, the rich man counts with his fingers the gain of the years to come.

But of those years, infinite, that are to be, Holbein says nothing. ‘I know not; I see not. This only I see, on this very winter’s day, the low pale stumbling-block at your feet, the altogether by you unseen and forgotten Death. You shall not pass *him* by on the other side; here is a fasting figure in skin and bone, at last, that will stop you; and for all the hidden treasures of earth, here is your spade: dig now, and find them.’

177. I have said that Holbein was condemned to teach these things. He was not happy in teaching them, nor thanked for teaching them. Nor was Botticelli for his lovelier teaching. But they both could do no otherwise. They lived in truth and steadfastness; and with both, in their marvellous design, veracity is the beginning of invention, and love its end.

I have but time to show you, in conclusion, how this affectionate self-forgetfulness protects Holbein from the chief calamity of the German temper, vanity, which is at the root of all Durer’s weakness. Here is a photograph

of Holbein's portrait of Erasmus, and a fine proof of Durer's. In Holbein's, the face leads everything; and the most lovely qualities of the face lead in that. The cloak and cap are perfectly painted, just because you look at them neither more nor less than you would have looked at the cloak in reality. You don't say, 'How brilliantly they are touched,' as you would with Rembrandt; nor 'How gracefully they are neglected,' as you would with Gainsborough; nor 'How exquisitely they are shaded,' as you would with Leonardo; nor 'How grandly they are composed,' as you would with Titian. You say only, 'Erasmus is surely there; and what a pleasant sight!' You don't think of Holbein at all. He has not even put in the minutest letter H, that I can see, to remind you of him. Drops his H's, I regret to say, often enough. 'My hand should be enough for you; what matters my name?' But now, look at Durer's. The very first thing you see, and at any distance, is this great square tablet with

"The image of Erasmus, drawn from the life by
Albert Durer, 1526,"

and a great straddling A.D. besides. Then you see a cloak, and a table, and a pot, with flowers in it, and a heap of books with all their leaves and all their clasps, and all the little bits of leather gummed in to mark the places; and last of all you see Erasmus's face; and when you do see it, the most of it is wrinkles.

All egotism and insanity, this, gentlemen. Hard words to use; but not too hard too define the faults which ren-



"HE THAT HATH EARS TO HEAR LET HIM HEAR."

(Fig. 6.) Fac-simile from Holbein's woodcut.

dered so much of Durer's great genius abortive, and to this day paralyze, among the details of a lifeless and ambitious precision, the student, no less than the artist, of German blood. For too many an Erasmus, too many a Durer, among them, the world is all cloak and clasp, instead of face or book; and the first object of their lives is to engrave their initials.

For us, in England, not even so much is at present to be hoped; and yet, singularly enough, it is more our modesty, unwisely submissive, than our vanity, which has destroyed our English school of engraving.

At the bottom of the pretty line engravings which used to represent, characteristically, our English skill, one saw always *two* inscriptions. At the left-hand corner, "Drawn by—so-and-so;" at the right-hand corner, "Engraved by—so-and-so." Only under the worst and cheapest plates—for the Stationers' Almanack, or the like,—one saw sometimes, "Drawn and engraved by—so-and-so," which meant nothing more than that the publisher would not go to the expense of an artist, and that the engraver haggled through as he could. (One fortunate exception, gentlemen, you have in the old drawings for your Oxford Almanack, though the publishers, I have no doubt, even in that case, employed the cheapest artist they could find.*)

* The drawings were made by Turner, and are now among the chief treasures of the Oxford Galleries. I ought to add some notice of Hogarth to this lecture in the Appendix; but fear I shall have no time; besides, though I have profound respect for Hogarth, as, in literature,

But in general, no engraver thought himself able to draw ; and no artist thought it his business to engrave.

But the fact that this and the following lecture are on the subject of design in engraving, implies of course that in the work we have to examine, it was often the engraver himself who designed, and as often the artist who engraved.

And you will observe that the only engravings which bear imperishable value are, indeed, in this kind. It is true that, in wood cutting, both Durer and Holbein, as in our own days Leech and Tenniel, have workmen under them who can do all they want. But in metal cutting it is not so. For, as I have told you, in metal cutting, ultimate perfection of Line has to be reached ; and it can be reached by none but a master's hand ; nor by his, unless in the very moment and act of designing. Never, unless under the vivid first force of imagination and intellect, can the Line have its full value. And for this high reason, gentlemen, that paradox which perhaps seemed to you so daring, is nevertheless deeply and finally true, that while a woodcut may be laboriously finished, a grand engraving on metal must be comparatively incomplete. For it must be done, throughout, with the full fire of temper in it, visibly governing its lines, as the wind does the fibres of cloud.

I have for Fielding, I can't criticise them, because I know nothing of their subjects.

The value hitherto attached to Rembrandt's etchings, and others imitating them, depends on a true instinct in the public mind for this virtue of line. But etching is an indolent and blundering method at the best ; and I do not doubt that you will one day be grateful for the severe disciplines of drawing required in these schools, in that they will have enabled you to know what a line may be, driven by a master's chisel on silver or marble, following, and fostering as it follows, the instantaneous strength of his determined thought.

LECTURE VI.

DESIGN IN THE FLORENTINE SCHOOLS OF ENGRAVING.

1. IN the first of these lectures, I stated to you their subject, as the investigation of the engraved work of a group of men, to whom engraving, as a means of popular address, was above all precious, because their art was distinctively didactic.

Some of my hearers, must be aware that, of late years, the assertion that art should be didactic has been clamorously and violently derided by the countless crowd of artists who have nothing to represent, and of writers who have nothing to say; and that the contrary assertion—that art consists only in pretty colours and fine words,—is accepted, readily enough, by a public which rarely pauses to look at a picture with attention, or read a sentence with understanding.

2. Gentlemen, believe me, there never was any great advancing art yet, nor can be, without didactic purpose. The leaders of the strong schools are, and must be always, either teachers of theology, or preachers of the moral law. I need not tell you that it was as teachers of theology on the walls of the Vatican that the masters with whose

names you are most familiar obtained their perpetual fame. But however great their fame, you have not practically, I imagine, ever been materially assisted in your preparation for the schools either of philosophy or divinity by Raphael's 'School of Athens,' by Raphael's 'Theology,'—or by Michael Angelo's 'Judgment.' My task, to-day, is to set before you some part of the design of the first Master of the works in the Sistine Chapel; and I believe that, from his teaching, you will, even in the hour which I ask you now to give, learn what may be of true use to you in all your future labour, whether in Oxford or elsewhere.

3. You have doubtless, in the course of these lectures, been occasionally surprised by my speaking of Holbein and Sandro Botticelli, as Reformers, in the same tone of respect, and with the same implied assertion of their intellectual power and agency, with which it is usual to speak of Luther and Savonarola. You have been accustomed, indeed, to hear painting and sculpture spoken of as supporting or enforcing Church doctrine; but never as reforming or chastising it. Whether Protestant or Roman Catholic, you have admitted what in the one case you held to be the abuse of painting, in the furtherance of idolatry—in the other, its amiable and exalting ministry to the feebleness of faith. But neither have recognized,—the Protestant his ally,—or the Catholic his enemy, in the far more earnest work of the great painters of the fifteenth century. The Protestant was, in most cases, too vulgar to understand the aid offered to him by painting; and in all

cases too terrified to believe in it. He drove the gift-bringing Greek with imprecations from his sectarian fortress, or received him within it only on the condition that he should speak no word of religion there.

4. On the other hand, the Catholic, in most cases too indolent to read, and, in all, too proud to dread, the rebuke of the reforming painters, confused them with the crowd of his old flatterers, and little noticed their altered language, or their graver brow. In a little while, finding they had ceased to be amusing, he effaced their works, not as dangerous, but as dull; and recognized only thenceforward, as art, the innocuous bombast of Michael Angelo, and fluent efflorescence of Bernini. But when you become more intimately and impartially acquainted with the history of the Reformation, you will find that, as surely and earnestly as Memling and Giotto strove in the north and south to set forth and exalt the Catholic faith, so surely and earnestly did Holbein and Botticelli strive, in the north, to chastise, and, in the south, to revive it. In what manner, I will try to-day briefly to show you.

5. I name these two men as the reforming leaders; there were many, rank and file, who worked in alliance with Holbein; with Botticelli, two great ones, Lippi and Perugino. But both of these had so much pleasure in their own pictorial faculty, that they strove to keep quiet, and out of harm's way,—involuntarily manifesting themselves sometimes, however; and not in the wisest manner. Lippi's running away with a novice was not likely to be

understood as a step in Church reformation correspondent to Luther's marriage.* Nor have Protestant divines, even to this day, recognized the real meaning of the reports of Perugino's 'infidelity.' Botticelli, the pupil of the one, and the companion of the other, held the truths they taught him through sorrow as well as joy; and he is the greatest of the reformers, because he preached without blame; though the least known, because he died without victory.

I had hoped to be able to lay before you some better biography of him than the traditions of Vasari, of which I gave a short abstract some time back in *Fors Clavigera*; but as yet I have only added internal evidence to the popular story, the more important points of which I must review briefly. It will not waste your time if I read,—instead of merely giving you reference to,—the passages on which I must comment.

6. "His father, Mariano Filipepi, a Florentine citizen, brought him up with care, and caused him to be instructed in all such things as are usually taught to children before they choose a calling. But although the boy readily ac-

* The world was not then ready for *Le Père Hyacinthe*;—but the real gist of the matter is that Lippi did, openly and bravely, what the highest prelates in the Church did basely and in secret; also he loved, where they only lusted; and he has been proclaimed therefore by them—and too foolishly believed by us—to have been a shameful person. Of his true life, and the colours given to it, we will try to learn something tenable, before we end our work in Florence.

quired whatever he wished to learn, yet was he constantly discontented ; neither would he take any pleasure in reading, writing, or accounts, insomuch that the father, disturbed by the eccentric habits of his son, turned him over in despair to a gossip of his, called Botticello, who was a goldsmith, and considered a very competent master of his art, to the intent that the boy might learn the same."

"He took no pleasure in reading, writing, nor accounts"! You will find the same thing recorded of Cimabue ; but it is more curious when stated of a man whom I cite to you as typically a gentleman and a scholar. But remember, in those days, though there were not so many entirely correct books issued by the Religious Tract Society for boys to read, there were a great many more pretty things in the world for boys to see. The Val d'Arno was Pater-noster Row to purpose ; their Father's Row, with books of His writing on the mountain shelves. And the lad takes to looking at things, and thinking about them, instead of reading about them,—which I commend to you, also, as much the more scholarly practice of the two. To the end, though he knows all about the celestial hierarchies, he is not strong in his letters, nor in his dialect. I asked Mr. Tyrrwhitt to help me through with a bit of his Italian the other day. Mr. Tyrrwhitt could only help me by suggesting that it was "Botticelli for so-and-so." And one of the minor reasons which induce me so boldly to attribute these sibyls to him, instead of Bandini, is that the lettering is so ill done. The engraver would assuredly have had his lettering all

right,—or at least neat. Botticelli blunders through it, scratches impatiently out when he goes wrong; and as I told you there's no repentance in the engraver's trade leaves all the blunders visible.

7. I may add one fact bearing on this question lately communicated to me.* In the autumn of 1872 I possessed myself of an Italian book of pen drawings, some, I have no doubt, by Mantegna in his youth, others by Sandro himself. In examining these, I was continually struck by the comparatively feeble and blundering way in which the titles were written, while all the rest of the handling was really superb; and still more surprised when, on the sleeves and hem of the robe of one of the principal figures of women, (“*Helena rapita da Paris*,”) I found what seemed to be meant for inscriptions, intricately embroidered; which nevertheless, though beautifully drawn, I could not read. In copying Botticelli's Zipporah this spring, I found the border of her robe wrought with characters of the same kind, which a young painter, working with me, who already knows the minor secrets of Italian art better than I,† assures me are letters,—and letters of a language hitherto undeciphered.

8. “There was at that time a close connexion and almost constant intercourse between the goldsmiths and the painters, wherefore Sandro, who possessed considera-

* I insert supplementary notes, when of importance, in the text of the lecture, for the convenience of the general reader.

† Mr. Charles F. Murray.

ble ingenuity, and was strongly disposed to the arts of design, became enamoured of painting, and resolved to devote himself entirely to that vocation. He acknowledged his purpose at once to his father; and the latter, who knew the force of his inclination, took him accordingly to the Carmelite monk, Fra Filippo, who was a most excellent painter of that time, with whom he placed him to study the art, as Sandro himself had desired. Devoting himself thereupon entirely to the vocation he had chosen, Sandro so closely followed the directions, and imitated the manner, of his master, that Fra Filippo conceived a great love for him, and instructed him so effectually, that Sandro rapidly attained to such a degree in art as none would have predicted for him."

I have before pointed out to you the importance of training by the goldsmith. Sandro got more good of it, however, than any of the other painters so educated,—being enabled by it to use gold for light to colour, in a glowing harmony never reached with equal perfection, and rarely attempted, in the later schools. To the last, his paintings are partly treated as work in niello; and he names himself, in perpetual gratitude, from this first artizan master. Nevertheless, the fortunate fellow finds, at the right moment, another, even more to his mind, and is obedient to him through his youth, as to the other through his childhood. And this master loves him; and instructs him 'so effectually,'—in grinding colors, do you suppose, only; or in laying of lines only; or in anything more than these?

9. I will tell you what Lippi must have taught any boy whom he loved. First, humility, and to live in joy and peace, injuring no man—if such innocence might be. Nothing is so manifest in every face by him, as its gentleness and rest. Secondly, to finish his work perfectly, and in such temper that the angels might say of it—not he himself—‘Iste perfecit opus.’ Do you remember what I told you in the Eagle’s Nest, that true humility was in hoping that angels might sometimes admire *our* work; not in hoping that we should ever be able to admire *theirs*? Thirdly,—a little thing it seems, but was a great one,—love of flowers. No one draws such lilies or such daisies as Lippi. Botticelli beat him afterwards in roses, but never in lilies. Fourthly, due honour for classical tradition. Lippi is the only religious painter who dresses John Baptist in the camel-skin, as the Greeks dressed Heracles in the lion’s,—over the head. Lastly, and chiefly of all,—Le Père Hyacinthe taught his pupil certain views about the doctrine of the Church, which the boy thought of more deeply than his tutor, and that by a great deal; and Master Sandro presently got himself into such question for painting heresy, that if he had been as hot-headed as he was true-hearted, he would soon have come to bad end by the tar-barrel. But he is so sweet and so modest, that nobody is frightened; so clever, that everybody is pleased: and at last, actually the Pope sends for him to paint his own private chapel,—where the first thing my young gentleman does, mind you, is to paint the devil, in a monk’s dress

tempting Christ! The sauciest thing, out and out, done in the history of the Reformation, it seems to me; yet so wisely done, and with such true respect otherwise shown for what was sacred in the Church, that the Pope didn't mind: and all went on as merrily as marriage bells.

10. I have anticipated, however, in telling you this, the proper course of his biography, to which I now return.

“While still a youth he painted the figure of Fortitude, among those pictures of the Virtues which Antonio and Pietro Pollaiuolo were executing in the Mercatanzia, or Tribunal of Commerce, in Florence. In Santo Spirito, a church of the same city, he painted a picture for the chapel of the Bardi family: this work he executed with great diligence, and finished it very successfully, depicting certain olive and palm trees therein with extraordinary care.”

It is by a beautiful chance that the first work of his, specified by his Italian biographer, should be the Fortitude.* Note also what is said of his tree drawing.

“Having, in consequence of this work, obtained much credit and reputation, Sandro was appointed by the Guild of Porta Santa Maria to paint a picture in San Marco, the subject of which is the Coronation of Our Lady, who is surrounded by a choir of angels—the whole extremely well designed, and finished by the artist with infinite care. He executed various works in the Medici Palace for the elder

* Some notice of this picture is given at the beginning of my third Morning in Florence, ‘Before the Soldan.’

Lorenzo, more particularly a figure of Pallas on a shield wreathed with vine branches, whence flames are proceeding : this he painted of the size of life. A San Sebastiano was also among the most remarkable of the works executed for Lorenzo. In the church of Santa Maria Maggiore, in Florence, is a Pietà, with small figures, by this master : this is a very beautiful work. For different houses in various parts of the city Sandro painted many pictures of a round form, with numerous figures of women undraped. Of these there are still two examples at Castello, a villa of the Duke Cosimo,—one representing the birth of Venus, who is borne to earth by the Loves and Zephyrs ; the second also presenting the figure of Venus crowned with flowers by the Graces : she is here intended to denote the Spring, and the allegory is expressed by the painter with extraordinary grace.”

Our young Reformer enters, it seems, on a very miscellaneous course of study ; the Coronation of Our Lady ; St. Sebastian ; Pallas in vine-leaves ; and Venus,—without fig-leaves. Not wholly Calvinistic, Fra Filippo’s teaching seems to have been ! All the better for the boy—being such a boy as he was : but I cannot in this lecture enter farther into my reasons for saying so.

11. Vasari, however, has shot far ahead in telling us of this picture of the Spring, which is one of Botticelli’s completest works. Long before he was able to paint Greek nymphs, he had done his best in idealism of greater spirits ; and, while yet quite a youth, painted, at Castello,

the Assumption of Our Lady, with "the patriarchs, the prophets, the apostles, the evangelists, the martyrs, the confessors, the doctors, the virgins, and the hierarchies!"

Imagine this subject proposed to a young, (or even old) British artist, for his next appeal to public sensation at the Academy! But do you suppose that the young British artist is wiser and more civilized than Lippi's scholar, because his only idea of a patriarch is of a man with a long beard; of a doctor, the M.D. with the brass plate over the way; and of a virgin, Miss — of the — theatre?

Not that even Sandro was able, according to Vasari's report, to conduct the entire design himself. The proposer of the subject assisted him; and they made some modifications in the theology, which brought them both into trouble—so early did Sandro's innovating work begin, into which subjects our gossiping friend waives unnecessary inquiry, as follows.

"But although this picture is exceedingly beautiful, and ought to have put envy to shame, yet there were found certain malevolent and censorious persons who, not being able to affix any other blame to the work, declared that Matteo and Sandro had erred gravely in that matter, and had fallen into grievous heresy.

"Now, whether this be true or not, let none expect the judgment of that question from me: it shall suffice me to note that the figures executed by Sandro in that work are entirely worthy of praise; and that the pains he took in depicting those circles of the heavens must have been very

great, to say nothing of the angels mingled with the other figures, or of the various foreshortenings, all which are designed in a very good manner.

“About this time Sandro received a commission to paint a small picture with figures three parts of a braccio high, —the subject an Adoration of the Magi.

“It is indeed a most admirable work : the composition, the design, and the colouring are so beautiful that every artist who examines it is astonished ; and, at the time, it obtained so great a name in Florence, and other places, for the master, that Pope Sixtus IV. having erected the chapel built by him in his palace at Rome, and desiring to have it adorned with paintings, commanded that Sandro Botticelli should be appointed Superintendent of the work.”

12. Vasari's words, “about this time,” are evidently wrong. It must have been many and many a day after he painted Matteo's picture that he took such high standing in Florence as to receive the mastership of the works in the Pope's chapel at Rome. Of his position and doings there, I will tell you presently ; meantime, let us complete the story of his life.

“By these works Botticelli obtained great honour and reputation among the many competitors who were labouring with him, whether Florentines or natives of other cities, and received from the Pope a considerable sum of money ; but this he consumed and squandered totally, during his residence in Rome, where he lived without due care, as was his habit.”

13. Well, but one would have liked to hear *how* he squandered his money, and whether he was without care—of other things than money.

It is just possible, Master Vasari, that Botticelli may have laid out his money at higher interest than you know of; meantime, he is advancing in life and thought, and becoming less and less comprehensible to his biographer. And at length, having got rid, somehow, of the money he received from the Pope; and finished the work he had to do, and uncovered it,—free in conscience, and empty in purse, he returned to Florence, where, “being a sophistical person, he made a comment on a part of Dante, and drew the *Inferno*, and put it in engraving, in which he consumed much time; and not working for this reason, brought infinite disorder into his affairs.”

14. Unpaid work, this engraving of Dante, you perceive,—consuming much time also, and not appearing to Vasari to be work at all. It is but a short sentence, gentlemen,—this, in the old edition of Vasari, and obscurely worded,—a very foolish person’s contemptuous report of a thing to him totally incomprehensible. But the thing itself is out-and-out the most important fact in the history of the religious art of Italy. I can show you its significance in not many more words than have served to record it.

Botticelli had been painting in Rome; and had expressly chosen to represent there,—being Master of Works, in the presence of the Defender of the Faith,—the founda-

tion of the Mosaic law ; to his mind the Eternal Law of God,—that law of which modern Evangelicals sing perpetually their own original psalm, “ Oh, how hate I Thy law ! it is my abomination all the day.” Returning to Florence, he reads Dante’s vision of the Hell created by its violation. He knows that the pictures he has painted in Rome cannot be understood by the people ; they are exclusively for the best trained scholars in the Church. Dante, on the other hand, can only be read in manuscript ; but the people could and would understand *his* lessons, if they were pictured in accessible and enduring form. He throws all his own lauded work aside,—all for which he is most honoured, and in which his now matured and magnificent skill is as easy to him as singing to a perfect musician. And he sets himself to a servile and despised labour,—his friends mocking him, his resources failing him, infinite ‘ disorder ’ getting into his affairs—of this world.

15. Never such another thing happened in Italy any more. Botticelli engraved her Pilgrim’s Progress for her, putting himself in prison to do it. She would not read it when done. Raphael and Marc Antonio were the theologians for her money. Pretty Madonnas, and satyrs with abundance of tail,—let our pilgrim’s progress be in *these* directions, if you please.

Botticelli’s own pilgrimage, however, was now to be accomplished triumphantly, with such crowning blessings as Heaven might grant to him. In spite of his friends

and his disordered affairs, he went his own obstinate way ; and found another man's words worth engraving, as well as Dante's ; not without perpetuating, also, what he deemed worthy of his own.

16. What would that be, think you ? His chosen works before the Pope in Rome ?—his admired Madonnas in Florence ?—his choirs of angels and thickets of flowers ? Some few of these—yes, as you shall presently see ; but “the best attempt of this kind from his hand is the Triumph of Faith, by Fra Girolamo Savonarola, of Ferrara, of whose sect our artist was so zealous a partisan that he totally abandoned painting, and not having any other means of living, he fell into very great difficulties. But his attachment to the party he had adopted increased ; he became what was then called a *Piagnone*, or Mourner, and abandoned all labour ; insomuch that, finding himself at length become old, being also very poor, he must have died of hunger had he not been supported by Lorenzo de' Medici, for whom he had worked at the small hospital of Volterra and other places, who assisted him while he lived, as did other friends and admirers of his talents.”

17. In such dignity and independence—having employed his talents not wholly at the orders of the dealer—died, a poor bedesman of Lorenzo de' Medici, the President of that high academy of art in Rome, whose Academicians were Perugino, Ghirlandajo, Angelico, and Signorelli ; and whose students, Michael Angelo and Raphael.

‘A worthless, ill-conducted fellow on the whole,’ thinks Vasari, ‘with a crazy fancy for scratching on copper.’

Well, here are some of the scratches for you to see ; only, first, I must ask you seriously for a few moments to consider what the two powers were, which, with this iron pen of his, he has set himself to reprove.

18. Two great forms of authority reigned over the entire civilized world, confessedly, and by name, in the middle ages. They reign over it still, and must for ever, though at present very far from confessed ; and, in most places, ragingly denied.

The first power is that of the Teacher, or true Father ; the Father ‘in God.’ It may be—happy the children to whom it is—the actual father also ; and whose parents have been their tutors. But, for the most part, it will be some one else who teaches them, and moulds their minds and brain. All such teaching, when true, being from above, and coming down from the Father of Lights, with whom is no variableness, neither shadow of turning, is properly that of the holy Catholic ‘*ἐκκλησία*,’ council, church, or papacy, of many fathers in God, not of one. Eternally powerful and divine ; revered of all humble and lowly scholars, in Jewry, in Greece, in Rome, in Gaul, in England, and beyond sea, from Arctic zone to zone.

The second authority is the power of National Law, enforcing justice in conduct by due reward and punishment. Power vested necessarily in magistrates capable of administering it with mercy and equity ; whose authority, be it

of many or few, is again divine, as proceeding from the King of kings, and was acknowledged, throughout civilized Christendom, as the power of the Holy Empire, or Holy Roman Empire, because first throned in Rome; but it is for ever also acknowledged, namelessly, or by name, by all loyal, obedient, just, and humble hearts, which truly desire that, whether for them or against them, the eternal equities and dooms of Heaven should be pronounced and executed; and as the wisdom or word of their Father should be taught, so the will of their Father should be done, on earth, as it is in heaven.

19. You all here know what contention, first, and then what corruption and dishonour, had paralyzed these two powers before the days of which we now speak. Reproof, and either reform or rebellion, became necessary everywhere. The northern Reformers, Holbein, and Luther, and Henry, and Cromwell, set themselves to their task rudely, and, it might seem, carried it through. The southern Reformers, Dante, and Savonarola, and Botticelli, set hand to their task reverently, and, it seemed, did not by any means carry it through. But the end is not yet.

20. Now I shall endeavour to-day to set before you the art of Botticelli, especially as exhibiting the modesty of great imagination trained in reverence, which characterized the southern Reformers; and as opposed to the immodesty of narrow imagination, trained in self-trust, which characterized the northern Reformers.

‘The modesty of great *imagination* ;’ that is to say, of

the power which conceives all things in true relation, and not only as they affect ourselves. I can show you this most definitely by taking one example of the modern, and unschooled temper, in Bewick ;* and setting it beside Botticelli's treatment of the same subject of thought,—namely, the meaning of war, and the reforms necessary in the carrying on of war.

21. Both the men are entirely at one in their purpose. They yearn for peace and justice to rule over the earth, instead of the sword ; but see how differently they will say what is in their hearts to the people they address. To Bewick, war was more an absurdity than it was a horror : he had not seen battle-fields, still less had he read of them, in ancient days. He cared nothing about heroes,—Greek, Roman, or Norman. What he knew, and saw clearly, was that Farmer Hodge's boy went out of the village one holiday afternoon, a fine young fellow, rather drunk, with a coloured riband in his hat ; and came back, ten years afterwards, with one leg, one eye, an old red coat, and a tobacco-pipe in the pocket of it. That is what he has got to say, mainly. So, for the pathetic side of the business, he draws you two old soldiers meeting as bricklayers' labourers ; and for the absurd side of it, he draws a stone, sloping side-

* I am bitterly sorry for the pain which my partial references to the man whom of all English artists whose histories I have read, I most esteem, have given to one remaining member of his family. I hope my meaning may be better understood after she has seen the close of this lecture.

ways with age, in a bare field, on which you can just read, out of a long inscription, the words "glorious victory;" but no one is there to read them,—only a jackass, who uses the stone to scratch himself against.

22. Now compare with this Botticelli's reproof of war. *He* had seen it, and often; and between noble persons;—knew the temper in which the noblest knights went out to it;—knew the strength, the patience, the glory, and the grief of it. He would fain see his Florence in peace; and yet he knows that the wisest of her citizens are her bravest soldiers. So he seeks for the ideal of a soldier, and for the greatest glory of war, that in the presence of these he may speak reverently, what he must speak. He does not go to Greece for his hero. He is not sure that even her patriotic wars were always right. But, by his religious faith, he cannot doubt the nobleness of the soldier who put the children of Israel in possession of their promised land, and to whom the sign of the consent of heaven was given by its pausing light in the valley of Ajalon. Must then setting sun and risen moon stay, he thinks, only to look upon slaughter? May no soldier of Christ bid them stay otherwise than so? He draws Joshua, but quitting his hold of the sword: its hilt rests on his bent knee; and he kneels before the sun, not commands it; and this is his prayer:—

"Oh, King of kings, and Lord of lords, who alone rulest always in eternity, and who correctest all our wanderings, —Giver of melody to the choir of the angels, listen Thou

a little to our bitter grief, and come and rule us, oh Thou highest King, with Thy love which is so sweet !”

Is not that a little better, and a little wiser, than Bewick’s jackass ? Is it not also better, and wiser, than the sneer of modern science ? ‘ What great men are we !—we, forsooth, can make almanacs, and know that the earth turns round. Joshua indeed ! Let us have no more talk of the old-clothesman.’

All Bewick’s simplicity is in that ; but none of Bewick’s understanding.

23. I pass to the attack made by Botticelli upon the guilt of wealth. So I had at first written ; but I should rather have written, the appeal made by him against the cruelty of wealth, then first attaining the power it has maintained to this day.

The practice of receiving interest had been confined, until this fifteenth century, with contempt and malediction, to the profession, so styled, of usurers, or to the Jews. The merchants of Augsburg introduced it as a convenient and pleasant practice among Christians also ; and insisted that it was decorous and proper even among respectable merchants. In the view of the Christian Church of their day, they might more reasonably have set themselves to defend adultery.* However, they appointed Dr. John Eck, of Ingoldstadt, to hold debates in all possible universities, at their expense, on the allowing of interest ; and as these Augsburgers had in Venice their special mart,

* Read Ezekiel xviii.

Fondaco, called of the Germans, their new notions came into direct collision with old Venetian ones, and were much hindered by them, and all the more, because, in opposition to Dr. John Eck, there was preaching on the other side of the Alps. The Franciscans, poor themselves, preached mercy to the poor: one of them, Brother Marco of San Gallo, planned the 'Mount of Pity' for their defence, and the merchants of Venice set up the first in the world, against the German Fondaco. The dispute burned far on towards our own times. You perhaps have heard before of one Antonio, a merchant of Venice, who persistently retained the then obsolete practice of lending money gratis, and of the peril it brought him into with the usurers. But you perhaps did not before know why it was the flesh, or heart of flesh, in him, that they so hated.

24. Against this newly risen demon of authorized usury, Holbein and Botticelli went out to war together. Holbein, as we have partly seen in his designs for the Dance of Death, struck with all his soldier's strength.* Botticelli uses neither satire nor reproach. He turns altogether away from the criminals; appeals only to heaven for defence against them. He engraves the design which, of all his work, must have cost him hardest toil in its execution,—the Virgin praying to her Son in heaven for pity upon the poor: "For these are also my children."† Un-

* See also the account by Dr. Woltmann of the picture of the Triumph of Riches. 'Holbein and his Time,' p. 352.

† These words are engraved in the plate, as spoken by the Virgin.

derneath, are the seven works of Mercy ; and in the midst of them, the building of the Mount of Pity : in the distance lies Italy, mapped in cape and bay, with the cities which had founded mounts of pity,—Venice in the distance, chief. Little seen, but engraved with the master's loveliest care, in the background there is a group of two small figures—the Franciscan brother kneeling, and an angel of Victory crowning him.

25. I call it an angel of Victory, observe, with assurance ; although there is no legend claiming victory, or distinguishing this angel from any other of those which adorn with crowns of flowers the nameless crowds of the blessed. For Botticelli has other ways of speaking than by written legends. I know by a glance at this angel that he has taken the action of it from a Greek coin ; and I know also that he had not, in his own exuberant fancy, the least need to copy the action of any figure whatever. So I understand, as well as if he spoke to me, that he expects me, if I am an educated gentleman, to recognize this particular action as a Greek angel's ; and to know that it is a temporal victory which it crowns.

26. And now farther, observe, that this classical learning of Botticelli's, received by him, as I told you, as a native element of his being, gives not only greater dignity and gentleness, but far wider range, to his thoughts of Reformation. As he asks for pity from the cruel Jew to the *poor* Gentile, so he asks for pity from the proud Christian to the *untaught* Gentile. Nay, for more than pity, for fellow-

ship, and acknowledgment of equality before God. The learned men of his age in general brought back the Greek mythology as anti-Christian. But Botticelli and Perugino, as pre-Christian; nor only as pre-Christian, but as the foundation of Christianity. But chiefly Botticelli, with perfect grasp of the Mosaic and classic theology, thought over and seized the harmonies of both; and he it was who gave the conception of that great choir of the prophets and sibyls, of which Michael Angelo, more or less ignorantly borrowing it in the Sistine Chapel, in great part lost the meaning, while he magnified the aspect.

27. For, indeed, all Christian and heathen mythology had alike become to Michael Angelo only a vehicle for the display of his own powers of drawing limbs and trunks: and having resolved, and made the world of his day believe, that all the glory of design lay in variety of difficult attitude, he flings the naked bodies about his ceiling with an upholsterer's ingenuity of appliance to the corners they could fit, but with total absence of any legible meaning. Nor do I suppose that one person in a million, even of those who have some acquaintance with the earlier masters, takes patience in the Sistine Chapel to conceive the original design. But Botticelli's mastership of the works evidently was given to him as a theologian, even more than as a painter; and the moment when he came to Rome to receive it, you may hold for the crisis of the Reformation in Italy. The main effort to save her priesthood was about to be made by her wisest Re-

former,—face to face with the head of her Church,—not in contest with him, but in the humblest subjection to him; and in adornment of his own chapel for his own delight, and more than delight, if it might be.

28. Sandro brings to work, not under him, but with him, the three other strongest and worthiest men he knows, Perugino, Ghirlandajo, and Luca Signorelli. There is evidently entire fellowship in thought between Botticelli and Perugino. They two together plan the whole; and Botticelli, though the master, yields to Perugino the principal place, the end of the chapel, on which is to be the Assumption of the Virgin. It was Perugino's favourite subject, done with his central strength; assuredly the crowning work of his life, and of lovely Christian art in Europe.

Michael Angelo painted it out, and drew devils and dead bodies all over the wall instead. But there remains to us, happily, the series of subjects designed by Botticelli to lead up to this lost one.

29. He came, I said, not to attack, but to restore the Papal authority. To show the power of inherited honour, and universal claim of divine law, in the Jewish and Christian Church,—the law delivered first by Moses; then, in final grace and truth, by Christ.

He designed twelve great pictures, each containing some twenty figures the size of life, and groups of smaller ones scarcely to be counted. Twelve pictures,—six to illustrate the giving of the law by Moses; and six, the ratification

and completion of it by Christ. Event by event, the jurisprudence of each dispensation is traced from dawn to close in this correspondence.

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|--|---|
| 1. Covenant of Circumcision. | 7. Covenant of Baptism. |
| 2. Entrance on his Ministry
by Moses. | 8. Entrance on His Ministry by
Christ. |
| 3. Moses by the Red Sea. | 9. Peter and Andrew by the Sea
of Galilee. |
| 4. Delivery of Law on Sinai. | 10. Sermon on Mount. |
| 5. Destruction of Korah. | 11. Giving Keys to St. Peter. |
| 6. Death of Moses. | 12. Last Supper. |

Of these pictures, Sandro painted three himself, Perugino three, and the Assumption; Ghirlandajo one, Signorelli one, and Rosselli four.* I believe that Sandro intended to take the roof also, and had sketched out the main succession of its design; and that the prophets and sibyls which he meant to paint, he drew first small, and engraved his drawings afterwards, that some part of the work might be, at all events, thus communicable to the world outside of the Vatican.

30. It is not often that I tell you my beliefs; but I am forced here, for there are no dates to found more on. Is it not wonderful that among all the infinite mass of fool's thoughts about the "majestic works of Michael Angelo" in the Sistine Chapel, no slightly more rational person has

* Cosimo Rosselli, especially chosen by the Pope for his gay colouring

ever asked what the chapel was first meant to be like, and how it was to be roofed?

Nor can I assure myself, still less you, that all these prophets and sibyls are Botticelli's. Of many there are two engravings, with variations: some are inferior in parts, many altogether. He signed none; never put grand tablets with 'S. B.' into his skies; had other letters than those to engrave, and no time to spare. I have chosen out of the series three of the sibyls, which have, I think, clear internal evidence of being his; and these you shall compare with Michael Angelo's. But first I must put you in mind what the sibyls were.

31. As the prophets represent the voice of God in man, the sibyls represent the voice of God in nature. They are properly all forms of one sibyl, *Διὸς Βουλή*, the counsel of God; and the chief one, at least in the Roman mind, was the Sibyl of Cumæ. From the traditions of her, the Romans, and we through them, received whatever lessons the myth, or fact, of sibyl power has given to mortals.

How much have you received, or may you yet receive, think you, of that teaching? I call it the myth, or fact; but remember that, *as* a myth, it *is* a fact. This story has concentrated whatever good there is in the imagination of visionary powers in women, inspired by nature only. The traditions of witch and gipsy are partly its offshoots. You despise both, perhaps. But can you, though in utmost pride of your supreme modern wisdom, suppose that the character—say, even of so poor and far-fallen a sibyl as

Meg Merrilies—is only the coinage of Scott's brain; or that, even being no more, it is valueless? Admit the figure of the Cumaean Sibyl, in like manner, to be the coinage only of Virgil's brain. As such, it, and the words it speaks, are yet facts in which we may find use, if we are reverent to them.

To me, personally, (I must take your indulgence for a moment to speak wholly of myself,) they have been of the truest service—quite material and indisputable.

I am writing on St. John's Day, in the monastery of Assisi; and I had no idea whatever, when I sat down to my work this morning, of saying any word of what I am now going to tell you. I meant only to expand and explain a little what I said in my lecture about the Florentine engraving. But it seems to me now that I had better tell you what the Cumaean Sibyl has actually done for me.

32. In 1871, partly in consequence of chagrin at the Revolution in Paris, and partly in great personal sorrow, I was struck by acute inflammatory illness at Matlock, and reduced to a state of extreme weakness; lying at one time unconscious for some hours, those about me having no hope of my life. I have no doubt that the immediate cause of the illness was simply, eating when I was not hungry; so that modern science would acknowledge nothing in the whole business but an extreme and very dangerous form of indigestion; and entirely deny any interference of the Cumaean Sibyl in the matter.

I once heard a sermon by Dr. Guthrie, in Edinburgh, upon the wickedness of fasting. It was very eloquent and ingenious, and finely explained the superiority of the Scotch Free Church to the benighted Catholic Church, in that the Free Church saw no merit in fasting. And there was no mention, from beginning to end of the sermon, of even the existence of such texts as Daniel i. 12, or Matthew vi. 16.

Without the smallest merit, I admit, in fasting, I was nevertheless reduced at Matlock to a state very near starvation; and could not rise from my pillow, without being lifted, for some days. And in the first clearly pronounced stage of recovery, when the perfect powers of spirit had returned, while the body was still as weak as it well could be, I had three dreams, which made a great impression on me; for in ordinary health my dreams are supremely ridiculous, if not unpleasant; and in ordinary conditions of illness, very ugly, and always without the slightest meaning. But these dreams were all distinct and impressive, and had much meaning, if I chose to take it.

.33. The first * was of a Venetian fisherman, who wanted me to follow him down into some water which I thought was too deep; but he called me on, saying he had something to show me; so I followed him; and presently, through an opening, as if in the arsenal wall, he showed me the bronze horses of St. Mark's, and said, 'See, the horses are putting on their harness.'

* I am not certain of their order at this distance of time.

The second was of a preparation at Rome, in St. Peter's, (or a vast hall as large as St. Peter's,) for the exhibition of a religious drama. Part of the play was to be a scene in which demons were to appear in the sky; and the stage servants were arranging grey fictitious clouds, and painted fiends, for it, under the direction of the priests. There was a woman dressed in black, standing at the corner of the stage watching them, having a likeness in her face to one of my own dead friends; and I knew somehow that she was not that friend, but a spirit; and she made me understand, without speaking, that I was to watch, for the play would turn out other than the priests expected. And I waited; and when the scene came on the clouds became real clouds, and the fiends real fiends, agitating them in slow quivering, wild and terrible, over the heads of the people and priests. I recollected distinctly, however, when I woke, only the figure of the black woman mocking the people, and of one priest in an agony of terror, with the sweat pouring from his brow, but violently scolding one of the stage servants for having failed in some ceremony, the omission of which, he thought, had given the devils their power.

The third dream was the most interesting and personal. Some one came to me to ask me to help in the deliverance of a company of Italian prisoners who were to be ransomed for money. I said I had no money. They answered, Yes, I had some that belonged to me as a brother of St. Francis, if I would give it up. I said I did not know even that I

was a brother of St. Francis ; but I thought to myself, that perhaps the Franciscans of Fèssole, whom I had helped to make hay in their fields in 1845, had adopted me for one ; only I didn't see how the consequence of that would be my having any money. However, I said they were welcome to whatever I had ; and then I heard the voice of an Italian woman singing ; and I have never heard such divine singing before nor since ;—the sounds absolutely strong and real, and the melody altogether lovely. If I could have written it ! But I could not even remember it when I woke,—only how beautiful it was.

34. Now these three dreams have, every one of them, been of much use to me since ; or so far as they have failed to be useful, it has been my own fault, and not theirs ; but the chief use of them at the time was to give me courage and confidence in myself, both in bodily distress, of which I had still not a little to bear ; and worse, much mental anxiety about matters supremely interesting to me, which were turning out ill. And through all such trouble—which came upon me as I was recovering, as if it meant to throw me back into the grave,—I held out and recovered, repeating always to myself, or rather having always murmured in my ears, at every new trial, one Latin line,

Tu ne cede malis, sed contra fortior ito.

Now I had got this line out of the tablet in the engraving of Raphael's vision, and had forgotten where it came from. And I thought I knew my sixth book of Virgil so

well, that I never looked at it again while I was giving these lectures at Oxford, and it was only here at Assisi, the other day, wanting to look more accurately at the first scene by the lake Avernus, that I found I had been saved by the words of the Cumaean Sibyl.

35. "Quam tua te Fortuna sinet," the completion of the sentence, has yet more and continual teaching in it for me now; as it has for all men. Her opening words, which have become hackneyed, and lost all present power through vulgar use of them, contain yet one of the most immortal truths ever yet spoken for mankind; and they will never lose their power of help for noble persons. But observe, both in that lesson, "Facilis descensus Averni," etc.; and in the still more precious, because universal, one on which the strength of Rome was founded,—the burning of the books,—the Sibyl speaks only as the voice of Nature, and of her laws;—not as a divine helper, prevailing over death; but as a mortal teacher warning us against it, and strengthening us for our mortal time; but not for eternity. Of which lesson her own history is a part, and her habitation by the Avernus lake. She desires immortality, fondly and vainly, as we do ourselves. She receives, from the love of her *refused* lover, Apollo, not immortality, but length of life;—her years to be as the grains of dust in her hand. And even this she finds was a false desire; and her wise and holy desire at last is—to die. She wastes away; becomes a shade only, and a voice. The Nations ask her, What wouldst thou!

She answers, Peace; only let my last words be true.
 "L'ultimo mie parlar sie verace."

36. Therefore, if anything is to be conceived, rightly, and chiefly, in the form of the Cumæan Sibyl, it must be of fading virginal beauty, of enduring patience, of far-looking into futurity. "For after my death there shall yet return," she says, "another virgin."

Jam redit et virgo;—redeunt Saturnia regna,
 Ultima Cumæi venit jam carminis ætas.

Here then is Botticelli's Cumæan Sibyl. She is armed, for she is the prophetess of Roman fortitude;—but her faded breast scarcely raises the corslet; her hair floats, not falls, in waves like the currents of a river,—the sign of enduring life; the light is full on her forehead: she looks into the distance as in a dream. It is impossible for art to gather together more beautifully or intensely every image which can express her true power, or lead us to understand her lesson.

37. Now you do not, I am well assured, know one of Michael Angelo's sibyls from another: unless perhaps the Delphian, whom of course he makes as beautiful as he can. But of this especially Italian prophetess, one would have thought he might, at least in some way, have shown that he knew the history, even if he did not understand it. She might have had more than one book, at all events, to burn. She might have had a stray leaf or two fallen at her feet. He could not indeed have painted her only as a

voice; but his anatomical knowledge need not have hindered him from painting her virginal youth, or her wasting and watching age, or her inspired hope of a holier future.

38. Opposite,—fortunately, photograph from the figure itself, so that you can suspect me of no exaggeration,—is Michael Angelo's Cumaean Sybil, wasting away. It is by a grotesque and most strange chance that he should have made the figure of this Sibyl, of all others in the chapel, the most fleshly and gross, even proceeding to the monstrous license of showing the nipples of the breast as if the dress were moulded over them like plaster. Thus he paints the poor nymph beloved of Apollo,—the clearest and queenliest in prophecy and command of all the sibyls,—as an ugly crone, with the arms of Goliath, poring down upon a single book.

39. There is one point of fine detail, however, in Botticelli's Cumaean Sibyl, and in the next I am going to show you, to explain which I must go back for a little while to the question of the direct relation of the Italian painters to the Greek. I don't like repeating in one lecture what I have said in another; but to save you the trouble of reference, must remind you of what I stated in my fourth lecture on Greek birds, when we were examining the adoption of the plume crests in armour, that the crest signifies command; but the diadem, *obedience*; and that every crown is primarily a diadem. It is the thing that binds, before it is the thing that honours.

Now all the great schools dwell on this symbolism. The long flowing hair is the symbol of life, and the *διάδημα* of the law restraining it. Royalty, or kingliness, over life, restraining and glorifying. In the extremity of restraint—in death, whether noble, as of death to Earth, or ignoble as of death to Heaven, the *διάδημα* is fastened with the mortcloth: “Bound hand and foot with grave-clothes, and the face bound about with the napkin.”

40. Now look back to the first Greek head I ever showed you, used as the type of archaic sculpture in Aratra Pentelici, and then look at the crown in Botticelli's *Astrologia*. It is absolutely the Greek form,—even to the peculiar oval of the forehead; while the diadem—the governing law—is set with appointed stars—to rule the destiny and thought. Then return to the Cumaean Sibyl. She, as we have seen, is the symbol of enduring life—almost immortal. The diadem is withdrawn from the forehead—reduced to a narrow fillet—here, and the hair thrown free.

41. From the Cumaean Sibyl's diadem, traced only by points, turn to that of the Hellespontic, (Plate 9, opposite). I do not know why Botticelli chose her for the spirit of prophecy in old age; but he has made this the most interesting plate of the series in the definiteness of its connection with the work from Dante, which becomes his own prophecy in old age. The fantastic yet solemn treatment of the gnarled wood occurs, as far as I know, in no other engravings but this and the illustrations to Dante;

and I am content to leave it, with little comment, for the reader's quiet study, as showing the exuberance of imagination which other men at this time in Italy allowed to waste itself in idle arabesque, restrained by Botticelli to his most earnest purposes; and giving the withered tree trunks hewn for the rude throne of the aged prophetess, the same harmony with her fading spirit which the rose has with youth, or the laurel with victory. - Also in its weird characters, you have the best example I can show you of the orders of decorative design which are especially expressible by engraving, and which belong to a group of art-instincts scarcely now to be understood, much less recovered, (the influence of modern naturalistic imitation being too strong to be conquered)—the instincts, namely, for the arrangement of pure line, in labyrinthine intricacy, through which the grace of order may give continual clue. The entire body of ornamental design, connected with writing, in the middle ages seems as if it were a sensible symbol, to the eye and brain, of the methods of error and recovery, the minglings of crooked with straight, and perverse with progressive, which constitute the great problem of human morals and fate; and when I chose the title for the collected series of these lectures, I hoped to have justified it by careful analysis of the methods of labyrinthine ornament, which, made sacred by Theseian traditions,* and beginning in imitation of physical truth, with

* Callimachus, 'Delos,' 304 etc.

the spiral waves of the waters of Babylon as the Assyrian carved them, entangled in their returns the eyes of men, on Greek vase and Christian manuscript—till they closed in the arabesques which sprang round the last luxury of Venice and Rome.

But the labyrinth of life itself, and its more and more interwoven occupation, become too manifold, and too difficult for me; and of the time wasted in the blind lanes of it, perhaps that spent in analysis or recommendation of the art to which men's present conduct makes them insensible, has been chiefly cast away. On the walls of the little room where I finally revise this lecture,* hangs an old silken sampler of great-grandame's work: representing the domestic life of Abraham: chiefly the stories of Isaac and Ishmael. Sarah at her tent-door, watching, with folded arms, the dismissal of Hagar: above, in a wilderness full of fruit trees, birds, and butterflies, little Ishmael lying at the root of a tree, and the spent bottle under another; Hagar in prayer, and the angel appearing to her out of a wreathed line of gloomily undulating clouds, which, with a dark-rayed sun in the midst, surmount the entire composition in two arches, out of which descend shafts of (I suppose) beneficent rain; leaving, however, room, in the corner opposite to Ishmael's angel, for Isaac's, who stays Abraham in the sacrifice: the ram in the thicket, the squirrel in the plum tree above him.

* In the Old King's Arms Hotel, Lancaster.

and the grapes, pears, apples, roses, and daisies of the foreground, being all wrought with involution of such ingenious needle-work as may well rank, in the patience, the natural skill, and the innocent pleasure of it, with the truest works of Florentine engraving. Nay; the actual tradition of many of the forms of ancient art is in many places evident,—as for instance in the spiral summits of the flames of the wood on the altar, which are like a group of first-springing fern. On the wall opposite is a smaller composition, representing Justice with her balance and sword, standing between the sun and moon, with a background of pinks, borage, and corncockle: a third is only a cluster of tulips and iris, with two Byzantine peacocks; but the spirits of Penelope and Ariadne reign vivid in all the work—and the richness of pleasurable fancy is as great still, in these silken labours, as in the marble arches and golden roof of the cathedral of Monreal.

But what is the use of explaining or analyzing it? Such work as this means the patience and simplicity of all feminine life; and can be produced, among *us* at least, no more. Gothic tracery itself, another of the instinctive labyrinthine intricacies of old, though analyzed to its last section, has become now the symbol only of a foolish ecclesiastical sect, retained for their shibboleth, joyless and powerless for all good. The very labyrinth of the grass and flowers of our fields, though dissected to its last leaf, is yet bitten bare, or trampled to slime, by the Minotaur of our lust; and for the traceried spire of the poplar by

the brook, we possess but the four-square furnace tower, to mingle its smoke with heaven's thunder-clouds.*

We will look yet at one sampler more of the engraved work, done in the happy time when flowers were pure, youth simple, and imagination gay,—Botticelli's Libyan Sibyl.

Glance back first to the Hellespontic, noting the close fillet, and the cloth bound below the face, and then you will be prepared to understand the last I shall show you, and the loveliest of the southern Pythonesses.

42. A less deep thinker than Botticelli would have made her parched with thirst, and burnt with heat. But the voice of God, through nature, to the Arab or the Moor, is not in the thirst, but in the fountain,—not in the desert, but in the grass of it. And this Libyan Sibyl is the spirit of wild grass and flowers, springing in desolate places.

You see, her diadem is a wreath of them ; but the blossoms of it are not fastening enough for her hair, though it is not long yet—(she is only in reality a Florentine girl of fourteen or fifteen)—so the little darling knots it under

* A manufacturer wrote to me the other day, "We don't *want* to make smoke!" Who said they did?—a hired murderer does not want to commit murder, but does it for sufficient motive. (Even our ship-owners don't want to drown their sailors ; they will only do it for sufficient motive.) If the dirty creatures *did* want to make smoke, there would be more excuse for them : and that they are not clever enough to consume it, is no praise to them. A man who can't help his hiccough leaves the room : why do they not leave the England they pollute ?

her ears, and then makes herself a necklace of it. But though flowing hair and flowers are wild and pretty, Botticelli had not, in these only, got the power of Spring marked to his mind. Any girl might wear flowers; but few, for ornament, would be likely to wear grass. So the Sibyl shall have grass in her diadem; not merely interwoven and bending, but springing and strong. You thought it ugly and grotesque at first, did not you? It was made so, because precisely what Botticelli wanted you to look at.

But that's not all. This conical cap of hers, with one bead at the top,—considering how fond the Florentines are of graceful head-dresses, this seems a strange one for a young girl. But, exactly as I know the angel of Victory to be Greek, at his Mount of Pity, so I know this head-dress to be taken from a Greek coin, and to be meant for a Greek symbol. It is the Petasus of Hermes—the mist of morning over the dew. Lastly, what will the Libyan Sibyl say to you? The letters are large on her tablet. Her message is the oracle from the temple of the dew: “The dew of thy birth is as the womb of the morning.”—“*Ecce venientem diem, et latentia aperientem, tenebit gremio gentium regina.*”

43. Why the daybreak came not then, nor yet has come, but only a deeper darkness; and why there is now neither queen nor king of nations, but every man doing that which is right in his own eyes, I would fain go on, partly to tell you, and partly to meditate with you: but it

is not our work for to-day. The issue of the Reformation which these great painters, the scholars of Dante, began, we may follow, farther, in the study to which I propose to lead you, of the lives of Cimabue and Giotto, and the relation of their work at Assisi to the chapel and chambers of the Vatican.

44. To-day let me finish what I have to tell you of the style of southern engraving. What sudden bathos in the sentence, you think! So contemptible the question of style, then, in painting, though not in literature? You study the 'style' of Homer; the style, perhaps, of Isaiah; the style of Horace, and of Massillon. Is it so vain to study the style of Botticelli?

In all cases, it is equally vain, if you think of their style first. But know their purpose, and then, their way of speaking is worth thinking of. These apparently unfinished and certainly unfilled outlines of the Florentine,—clumsy work, as Vasari thought them,—as Mr. Otley and most of our English amateurs still think them,—are these good or bad engraving?

You may ask now, comprehending their motive, with some hope of answering or being answered rightly. And the answer is, They are the finest gravers' work ever done yet by human hand. You may teach, by process of discipline and of years, any youth of good artistic capacity to engrave a plate in the modern manner; but only the noblest passion, and the tenderest patience, will ever engrave one line like these of Sandro Botticelli.

45. Passion, and patience! Nay, even these you may have to-day in England, and yet both be in vain. Only a few years ago, in one of our northern iron-foundries, a workman of intense power and natural art-faculty set himself to learn engraving;—made his own tools; gave all the spare hours of his laborious life to learn their use; learnt it; and engraved a plate which, in manipulation, no professional engraver would be ashamed of. He engraved his blast furnace, and the casting of a beam of a steam engine. This, to him, was the power of God,—it was his life.

No greater earnestness was ever given by man to promulgate a Gospel. Nevertheless, the engraving is absolutely worthless. The blast furnace *is not* the power of God; and the life of the strong spirit was as much consumed in the flames of it, as ever driven slave's by the burden and heat of the day.

How cruel to say so, if he yet lives, you think! No, my friends; the cruelty will be in you, and the guilt, if, having been brought here to learn that God is your Light, you yet leave the blast furnace to be the only light of England.

It has been, as I said in the note above (p. 167), with extreme pain that I have hitherto limited my notice of our own great engraver and moralist, to the points in which the disadvantages of English art-teaching made him inferior to his trained Florentine rival. But, that these disadvantages were powerless to arrest or ignobly depress him;—that however failing in grace and scholarship, he

should never fail in truth or vitality ; and that the precision of his unerring hand *—his inevitable eye—and his rightly judging heart—should place him in the first rank of the great artists not of England only, but of all the world and of all time :—that *this* was possible to him, was simply because he lived a *country* life. Bewick himself, Botticelli himself, Apelles himself, and twenty times Apelles, condemned to slavery in the hellfire of the iron furnace, could have done—NOTHING. Absolute paralysis of all high human faculty *must* result from labour near fire. The poor engraver of the piston-rod had faculties—not like Bewick's, for if he had had those, he never would have endured the degradation ; but assuredly, (I know this by his work,) faculties high enough to have made him one of the most accomplished figure painters of his age. And they are scorched out of him, as the sap from the grass in the oven : while on his Northumberland hill-sides, Bewick grew into as stately life as their strongest pine.

And therefore, in words of his, telling consummate and unchanging truth concerning the life, honour, and happiness of England, and bearing directly on the points of difference between class and class which I have not dwelt on without need, I will bring these lectures to a close.

“ I have always, through life, been of opinion that there

* I know no drawing so subtle as Bewick's, since the fifteenth century, except Holbein's and Turner's. I have been greatly surprised lately by the exquisite water-colour work in some of Stothard's smaller vignettes ; but he cannot set the line like Turner or Bewick.

is no business of any kind that can be compared to that of a man who farms his own land. It appears to me that every earthly pleasure, with health, is within his reach. But numbers of these men (the old statesmen) were grossly ignorant, and in exact proportion to that ignorance they were sure to be offensively proud. This led them to attempt appearing above their station, which hastened them on to their ruin ; but, indeed, this disposition and this kind of conduct invariably leads to such results. There were many of these lairds on Tyneside ; as well as many who held their lands on the tenure of ‘suit and service,’ and were nearly on the same level as the lairds. Some of the latter lost their lands (not fairly, I think) in a way they could not help ; many of the former, by their misdirected pride and folly, were driven into towns, to slide away into nothingness, and to sink into oblivion, while their ‘ha’ houses’ (halls), that ought to have remained in their families from generation to generation, have mouldered away. I have always felt extremely grieved to see the ancient mansions of many of the country gentlemen, from somewhat similar causes, meet with a similar fate. The gentry should, in an especial manner, prove by their conduct that they are guarded against showing any symptom of foolish pride, at the same time that they soar above every meanness, and that their conduct is guided by truth, integrity, and patriotism. If they wish the people to partake with them in these good qualities, they must set them the example, without which no real respect can ever be paid to

them. Gentlemen ought never to forget the respectable station they hold in society, and that they are the natural guardians of public morals and may with propriety be considered as the head and the heart of the country, while ‘a bold peasantry’ are, in truth, the arms, the sinews, and the strength of the same; but when these last are degraded, they soon become dispirited and mean, and often dishonest and useless.

* * * * *

“This singular and worthy man * was perhaps the most invaluable acquaintance and friend I ever met with. His

* Gilbert Gray, bookbinder. I have to correct the inaccurate—and very harmfully inaccurate, expression which I used of Bewick, in Love’s *Meinie*, ‘a printer’s lad at Newcastle.’ His first master was a goldsmith and engraver, else he could never have been an artist. I am very heartily glad to make this correction, which establishes another link of relation between Bewick and Botticelli; but my error was partly caused by the impression which the above description of his “most invaluable friend” made on me, when I first read it.

Much else that I meant to correct, or promised to explain, in this lecture, must be deferred to the Appendix; the superiority of the Tuscan to the Greek Aphrodite I may perhaps, even at last, leave the reader to admit or deny as he pleases, having more important matters of debate on hand. But as I mean only to play with Proserpina during the spring, I will here briefly anticipate a statement I mean in the Appendix to enforce, namely, of the extreme value of coloured copies by hand, of paintings whose excellence greatly consists in colour, as auxiliary to engravings of them. The prices now given without hesitation for nearly worthless original drawings by fifth-rate artists, would obtain for the misguided buyers, in something like a proportion of ten to one, most precious copies of drawings which can only be represented at all in en-

moral lectures and advice to me formed a most important succedaneum to those imparted by my parents. His wise remarks, his detestation of vice, his industry, and his temperance, crowned with a most lively and cheerful disposition, altogether made him appear to me as one of the best of characters. In his workshop I often spent my winter evenings. This was also the case with a number of young men who might be considered as his pupils; many of whom, I have no doubt, he directed into the paths of truth and integrity, and who revered his memory through life. He rose early to work, lay down when he felt weary, and rose again when refreshed. His diet was of the simplest kind; and he eat when hungry, and drank when dry, without paying regard to meal-times. By steadily pursuing this mode of life he was enabled to accumulate

graving by entire alteration of their treatment, and abandonment of their finest purposes. I feel this so strongly that I have given my best attention, during upwards of ten years, to train a copyist to perfect fidelity in rendering the work of Turner; and having now succeeded in enabling him to produce facsimiles so close as to look like replicas, facsimiles which I must sign with my own name and his, in the very work of them, to prevent their being sold for real Turner vignettes, I can obtain no custom for him, and am obliged to leave him to make his bread by any power of captivation his original sketches may possess in the eyes of a public which maintains a nation of copyists in Rome, but is content with black and white renderings of great English art; though there is scarcely one cultivated English gentleman or lady who has not been twenty times in the Vatican. for once that they have been in the National Gallery.

sums of money—from ten to thirty pounds. This enabled him to get books, of an entertaining and moral tendency, printed and circulated at a cheap rate. His great object was, by every possible means, to promote honourable feelings in the minds of youth, and to prepare them for becoming good members of society. I have often discovered that he did not overlook ingenious mechanics, whose misfortunes—perhaps mismanagement—had led them to a lodging in Newgate. To these he directed his compassionate eye, and for the deserving (in his estimation), he paid their debt, and set them at liberty. He felt hurt at seeing the hands of an ingenious man tied up in prison, where they were of no use either to himself or to the community. This worthy man had been educated for a priest; but he would say to me, ‘Of a “trouth,” Thomas, I did not like their ways.’ So he gave up the thoughts of being a priest, and bent his way from Aberdeen to Edinburgh, where he engaged himself to Allan Ramsay, the poet, then a bookseller at the latter place, in whose service he was both shopman and bookbinder. From Edinburgh he came to Newcastle. Gilbert had had a liberal education bestowed upon him. He had read a great deal, and had reflected upon what he had read. This, with his retentive memory, enabled him to be a pleasant and communicative companion. I lived in habits of intimacy with him to the end of his life; and, when he died, I, with others of his friends, attended his remains to the grave at the Ballast Hills.”

And what graving on the sacred cliffs of Egypt ever honoured them, as that grass-dimmed furrow does the mounds of our Northern land ?

THE END.

NOTES.

I. The following letter, from one of my most faithful readers, corrects an important piece of misinterpretation in the text. The waving of the reins must be only in sign of the fluctuation of heat round the Sun's own chariot :—

“Spring Field, Ambleside,

“February 11, 1875.

“Dear Mr. Ruskin,—Your fifth lecture on Engraving I have to hand.

“Sandro intended those wavy lines meeting under the Sun's right * hand, (Plate V.) primarily, no doubt, to represent the four ends of the four reins dangling from the Sun's hand. The flames and rays are seen to continue to radiate from the platform of the chariot between and beyond these ends of the reins, and over the knee. He may have wanted to acknowledge that the warmth of the earth was Apollo's, by making these ends of the reins spread out separately and wave, and thereby enclose a form like a flame. But I cannot think it.

“Believe me,

“Ever yours truly,

“CHAS. WM. SMITH.”

* “Would not the design have looked better, to us, on the plate than on the print? On the plate, the reins would be in the left hand; and the whole movement be from the left to the right? The two different forms that the radiance takes would symbolize respectfully heat and light, would they not?”

II. I meant to keep labyrinthine matters for my Appendix; but the following most useful byewords from Mr. Tyrerwhitt had better be read at once:—

“In the matter of Cretan Labyrinth, as connected by Virgil with the Ludus Trojæ, or equestrian game of winding and turning, continued in England from twelfth century; and having for last relic the maze * called ‘Troy Town,’ at Troy farm, near Somerton, Oxfordshire, which itself resembles the circular labyrinth on a coin of Cnosus in Fors Clavigera.

“The connecting quotation from Virg., *Æn.*, v., 588, is as follows:

‘Ut quondam Creta fertur Labyrinthus in alta
Parietibus textum cæcis iter, ancipitemque
Mille viis habuisse dolum, qua signa sequendi
Falleret indeprensus et inremeabilis error.
Haud alio Teucrûn nati vestigia cursu
Impediunt, texuntque fagas et prælia ludo,
Delphinum similes.’”

Labyrinth of Ariadne, as cut on the Downs by shepherds from time immemorial,—

Shakspeare, ‘*Midsummer Night’s Dream*,’ Act ii., sc. 2:

“*Oberon.* The nine-men’s-morris † is filled up with mud;
And the quaint mazes in the wanton green
By lack of tread are undistinguishable.”

The following passage, ‘*Merchant of Venice*,’ Act iii., sc. 2, confuses (to all appearance) the Athenian tribute to Crete, with the story

* Strutt, pp. 97-8, ed. 1801.

† Explained as “a game still played by the shepherds, cowkeepers,” etc., in the midland counties.

of Hesione: and may point to general confusion in the Elizabethan mind about the myths:

“ *Portia*. with much more love
Than young Alcides, when he did reduce
The virgin-tribute paid by howling Troy
To the sea monster.” *

Theseus is the Attic Hercules, however; and Troy may have been a sort of house of call for mythical monsters, in the view of mid-land shepherds.

* See *Iliad*, 20, 145.

APPENDIX.

ARTICLE I.

NOTES ON THE PRESENT STATE OF ENGRAVING IN ENGLAND

I HAVE long deferred the completion of this book, because I had hoped to find time to show, in some fulness, the grounds for my conviction that engraving, and the study of it, since the development of the modern finished school, have been ruinous to European knowledge of art. But I am more and more busied in what I believe to be better work, and can only with extreme brevity state here the conclusions of many years' thought.

These, in several important particulars, have been curiously enforced on me by the carelessness shown by the picture dealers about the copies from Turner which it has cost Mr. Ward and me * fifteen years of study together to enable ourselves to make. "They are only copies," say they,—“nobody will look at them.”

It never seems to occur even to the most intelligent

* See note to the close of this article, p. 217.

persons that an engraving also is 'only a copy,' and a copy done with refusal of colour, and with disadvantage of means in rendering shade. But just because this utterly inferior copy can be reduplicated, and introduces a different kind of skill, in another material, people are content to lose all the composition, and all the charm, of the original,—so far as these depend on the chief gift of a *painter*,—colour; while they are gradually misled into attributing to the painter himself qualities impertinently added by the engraver to make his plate popular: and, which is far worse, they are as gradually and subtly prevented from looking, in the original, for the qualities which engraving could never render. Further, it continually happens that the very best colour-compositions engrave worst; for they often extend colours over great spaces at equal pitch, and the green is as dark as the red, and the blue as the brown; so that the engraver can only distinguish them by lines in different directions, and his plate becomes a vague and dead mass of neutral tint; but a bad and forced piece of colour, or a piece of work of the Bolognese school, which is everywhere black in the shadows, and colourless in the lights, will engrave with great ease, and appear spirited and forcible. Hence engravers, as a rule, are interested in reproducing the work of the worst schools of painting.

Also, the idea that the merit of an engraving consisted in light and shade, has prevented the modern masters from even attempting to render works dependent mainly on

outline and expression ; like the early frescoes, which should indeed have been the objects of their most attentive and continual skill: for outline and expression are entirely within the scope of engraving ; and the scripture histories of an aisle of a cloister might have been engraved, to perfection, with little more pains than are given by ordinary workmen to round a limb by Correggio, or imitate the texture of a dress by Sir Joshua,—and both, at last, inadequately.

I will not lose more time in asserting or lamenting the mischief arising out of the existing system : but will rapidly state what the public should now ask for.

1. Exquisitely careful engraved outlines of all remaining frescoes of the thirteenth, fourteenth, and fifteenth centuries in Italy, with so much pale tinting as may be explanatory of their main masses ; and with the local darks and local lights brilliantly relieved. The Arundel Society have published some meritorious plates of this kind from Angelico,—not, however, paying respect enough to the local colours, but conventionalizing the whole too much into outline.

2. Finished small plates for book illustration. The cheap woodcutting and etching of popular illustrated books have been endlessly mischievous to public taste : they first obtained their power in a general reaction of the public mind from the insipidity of the lower school of line engraving, brought on it by servile persistence in hack work for ignorant publishers. The last dregs of it

may still be seen in the sentimental landscapes engraved for cheap ladies' pocket-books. But the woodcut can never, educationally, take the place of serene and accomplished line engraving; and the training of young artists in whom the gift of delineation prevails over their sense of colour, to the production of scholarly, but small plates, with their utmost honour of skill, would give a hitherto unconceived dignity to the character and range of our popular literature.

3. Vigorous mezzotints from pictures of the great masters, which originally present noble contrasts of light and shade. Many Venetian works are magnificent in this character.

4. Original design by painters themselves, decisively engraved in few lines—(*not* etched); and with such insistence by dotted work on the main contours as we have seen in the examples given from Italian engraving.

5. On the other hand, the men whose quiet patience and exquisite manual dexterity are at present employed in producing large and costly plates, such as that of the Belle Jardinière de Florence, by M. Boucher Desnoyers, should be entirely released from their servile toil, and employed exclusively in producing coloured copies, or light drawings, from the original work. The same number of hours of labour, applied with the like conscientious skill, would multiply precious likenesses of the real picture, full of subtle veracities which no steel line could

approach, and conveying, to thousands, true knowledge and unaffected enjoyment of painting; while the finished plate lies uncared for in the portfolio of the virtuoso, serving only, so far as it is seen in the printseller's window by the people, to make them think that sacred painting must always be dull, and unnatural.

I have named the above engraving, because, for persons wishing to study the present qualities and methods of line-work, it is a pleasant and sufficient possession, uniting every variety of texture with great serenity of unforced effect, and exhibiting every possible artifice and achievement in the distribution of even and rugged, or of close and open line; artifices for which,—while I must yet once more and emphatically repeat that they are illegitimate, and could not be practised in a revived school of classic art,—I would fain secure the reader's reverent admiration, under the conditions exacted by the school to which they belong. Let him endeavour, with the finest point of pen or pencil he can obtain, to imitate the profile of this Madonna in its relief against the grey background of the water surface; let him examine, through a good lens, the way in which the lines of the background are ended in a lance-point as they approach it; the exact equality of depth of shade being restored by inserted dots, which prepare for the transition to the manner of shade adopted in the flesh: then let him endeavour to trace with his own hand some of the curved lines at the edge of the eyelid, or in the rounding of the lip; or if these

be too impossible, even a few of the quiet undulations which gradate the folds of the hood behind the hair; and he will, I trust, begin to comprehend the range of delightful work which would be within the reach of such an artist, employed with more tractable material on more extended subject.

If, indeed, the present system were capable of influencing the mass of the people, and enforcing among them the subtle attention necessary to appreciate it, something might be pleaded in defence of its severity. But all these plates are entirely above the means of the lower middle classes, and perhaps not one reader in a hundred can possess himself, for the study I ask of him, even of the plate to which I have just referred. What, in the stead of such, he can and does possess, let him consider,—and, if possible, just after examining the noble qualities of this conscientious engraving.

Take up, for an average specimen of modern illustrated works, the volume of Dickens's 'Master Humphrey's Clock,' containing 'Barnaby Rudge.'

You have in that book an entirely profitless and monstrous story, in which the principal characters are a coxcomb, an idiot, a madman, a savage blackguard, a foolish tavern-keeper, a mean old maid, and a conceited apprentice,—mixed up with a certain quantity of ordinary operative pastoral stuff, about a pretty Dolly in ribands, a lover with a wooden leg, and an heroic locksmith. For these latter, the only elements of good, or life, in the filthy mass of the

story,* observe that the author must filch the wreck of those old times of which we fiercely and frantically destroy every living vestige, whenever it is possible. You cannot have your Dolly Varden brought up behind the counter of a railway station; nor your jolly locksmith trained at a Birmingham brass-foundry. And of these materials, observe that you can only have the ugly ones illustrated. The cheap popular art cannot draw for you beauty, sense, or honesty; and for Dolly Varden, or the locksmith, you will look through the vignettes in vain. But every species of distorted folly and vice,—the idiot, the blackguard, the coxcomb, the paltry fool, the degraded woman,—are pictured for your honourable pleasure in every page, with clumsy caricature, struggling to render its dulness tolerable by insisting on defect,—if perchance a penny or two more may be coined out of the Cockney reader's itch for loathsomeness.

Or take up, for instance of higher effort, the 'Cornhill Magazine' for this month, July, 1876. It has a vignette of Venice for an illuminated letter. That is what your decorative art has become, by help of Kensington! The letter to be produced is a T. There is a gondola in the front of the design, with the canopy slipped back to the stern like a saddle over a horse's tail. There is another in the middle distance, all gone to seed at the prow, with

* The raven, however, like all Dickens's animals, is perfect; and I am the more angry with the rest because I have every now and then to open the book to look for him.

its gondolier emaciated into an oar, at the stern; then there is a Church of the Salute, and a Ducal palace,—in which I beg you to observe all the felicity and dexterity of modern cheap engraving; finally, over the Ducal palace there is something, I know not in the least what meant for, like an umbrella dropping out of a balloon, which is the ornamental letter T. Opposite this ornamental design, there is an engraving of two young ladies and a parasol, between two trunks of trees. The white face and black feet of the principal young lady, being the points of the design, are done with as much care,—not with as much dexterity,—as an ordinary sketch of Dumourier's in Punch. The young lady's dress, the next attraction, is done in cheap white and black cutting, with considerably less skill than that of any ordinary tailor's or milliner's shop-book pattern drawing. For the other young lady, and the landscape, take your magnifying glass, and look at the hacked wood that forms the entire shaded surface—one mass of idiotic scrabble, without the remotest attempt to express a single leaf, flower, or clod of earth. It is such landscape as the public sees out of its railroad window at sixty miles of it in the hour,—and good enough for such a public.

Then turn to the last—the poetical plate, p. 122: “Lifts her—lays her down with care.” Look at the gentleman with the spade, promoting the advance, over a hillock of hay, of the reposing figure in the black-sided tub. Take your magnifying glass to *that*, and look what a dainty

female arm and hand your modern scientific and anatomical schools of art have provided you with! Look at the tender horizontal flux of the sea round the promontory point above. Look at the tender engraving of the linear light on the divine horizon, above the ravenous sea-gull. Here is Development and Progress for you, from the days of Perugino's horizon, and Dante's daybreaks! Truly, here it seems

“ Si che le bianche e le vermiglie guance
Per troppa etate divenivan rance.”

I have chosen no gross or mean instances of modern work. It is one of the saddest points connected with the matter that the designer of this last plate is a person of consummate art faculty, but bound to the wheel of the modern Juggernaut, and broken on it. These woodcuts, for ‘Barnaby Rudge’ and the ‘Cornhill Magazine,’ are favourably representative of the entire illustrative art industry of the modern press,—industry enslaved to the ghastly service of catching the last gleams in the glued eyes of the daily more bestial English mob,—railroad born and bred, which drags itself about the black world it has withered under its breath, in one eternal grind and shriek,—gobbling,—staring,—chattering,—giggling,—trampling out every vestige of national honour and domestic peace, wherever it sets the staggering hoof of it; incapable of reading, of hearing, of thinking, of looking,—capable only of greed for money, lust for food, pride of dress, and the pru-

rient itch of momentary curiosity for the politics last announced by the newsmonger, and the religion last rolled by the chemist into electuary for the dead.

In the miserably competitive labour of finding new stimulus for the appetite—daily more gross—of this tyrannous mob, we may count as lost, beyond any hope, the artists who are dull, docile, or distressed enough to submit to its demands; and we may count the dull and the distressed by myriads;—and among the docile, many of the best intellects we possess. The few who have sense and strength to assert their own place and supremacy, are driven into discouraged disease by their isolation, like Turner and Blake; the one abandoning the design of his ‘*Liber Studiòrum*’ after imperfectly and sadly, against total public neglect, carrying it forward to what it is,—monumental, nevertheless, in landscape engraving; the other producing, with one only majestic series of designs from the book of Job, nothing for his life’s work but coarsely iridescent sketches of enigmatic dream.

And, for total result of our English engraving industry during the last hundred and fifty years, I find that practically at this moment I cannot get a *single* piece of true, sweet, and comprehensible art, to place for instruction in any children’s school! I can get, for ten pounds apiece, well-engraved portraits of Sir Joshua’s beauties showing graceful limbs through flowery draperies; I can get—dirt-cheap—any quantity of Dutch flats, ditches, and hedges, enlivened by cows chewing the cud, and dogs behaving

indecently; I can get heaps upon heaps of temples, and forums, and altars, arranged as for academical competition, round seaports, with curled-up ships that only touch the water with the middle of their bottoms. I can get, at the price of lumber, any quantity of British squires flourishing whips and falling over hurdles; and, in suburban shops, a dolorous variety of widowed mothers nursing babies in a high light, with the Bible on a table, and baby's shoes on a chair. Also, of cheap prints, painted red and blue, of Christ blessing little children, of Joseph and his brethren, the infant Samuel, or Daniel in the lion's den, the supply is ample enough to make every child in these islands think of the Bible as a somewhat dull story-book, allowed on Sunday;—but of trained, wise, and worthy art, applied to gentle purposes of instruction, no single example can be found in the shops of the British printseller or bookseller. And after every dilettante tongue in European society has filled drawing-room and academy alike with idle clatter concerning the divinity of Raphael and Michael Angelo, for these last hundred years, I cannot at this instant, for the first school which I have some power of organizing under St. George's laws, get a good print of Raphael's Madonna of the tribune, or an ordinarily intelligible view of the side and dome of St. Peter's!

And there are simply no words for the mixed absurdity and wickedness of the present popular demand for art, as shown by its supply in our thoroughfares. Abroad, in the

shops of the Rue de Rivoli, brightest and most central of Parisian streets, the putrescent remnant of what was once Catholicism promotes its poor gilded pedlars' ware of nativity and crucifixion into such honourable corners as it can find among the more costly and studious illuminations of the brothel: and although, in Pall Mall, and the Strand, the large-margined Landseer,—Stanfield,—or Turner-proofs, in a few stately windows, still represent, uncared-for by the people, or inaccessible to them, the power of an English school now wholly perished,—these are too surely superseded, in the windows that stop the crowd, by the thrilling attraction with which Doré, Gérôme, and Tadema have invested the gambling table, the duelling ground, and the arena; or by the more material and almost tangible truth with which the apothecary-artist stereographs the stripped actress, and the railway mound.

Under these conditions, as I have now repeatedly asserted, no professorship, nor school, of art can be of the least use to the general public. No race can understand a visionary landscape, which blasts its real mountains into ruin, and blackens its river-beds with foam of poison. Nor is it of the least use to exhibit ideal Diana at Kensington, while substantial Phryne may be worshipped in the Strand. The only recovery of our art-power possible,—nay, when once we know the full meaning of it, the only one desirable,—must result from the purification of the nation's heart, and chastisement of its life: utterly hope-

less now, for our adult population, or in our large cities, and their neighbourhood. But, so far as any of the sacred influence of former design can be brought to bear on the minds of the young, and so far as, in rural districts, the first elements of scholarly education can be made pure, the foundation of a new dynasty of thought may be slowly laid. I was strangely impressed by the effect produced in a provincial seaport school for children, chiefly of fishermen's families, by the gift of a little coloured drawing of a single figure from the *Paradise* of Angelico in the *Accademia* of Florence. The drawing was wretched enough seen beside the original : I had only bought it from the poor Italian copyist for charity ; but, to the children, it was like an actual glimpse of heaven ; they rejoiced in it with pure joy, and their mistress thanked me for it more than if I had sent her a whole library of good books. Of such copies, the grace-giving industry of young girls, now worse than lost in the spurious charities of the bazaar, or selfish ornamentations of the drawing-room, might, in a year's time, provide enough for every dame-school in England ; and a year's honest work of the engravers employed on our base novels, might represent to our advanced students every frescoed legend of philosophy and morality extant in Christendom.

For my own part, I have no purpose, in what remains to me of opportunity, either at Oxford or elsewhere, to address any farther course of instruction towards the development of existing schools. After seeing the stream

of the Teviot as black as ink, and a putrid carcase of a sheep lying in the dry channel of the Jed, under Jedburgh Abbey, (the entire strength of the summer stream being taken away to supply a single mill,) I know, finally, what value the British mind sets on the 'beauties of nature,' and shall attempt no farther the excitement of its enthusiasm in that direction. I shall indeed endeavour to carry out, with Mr. Ward's help, my twenty years' held purpose of making the real character of Turner's work known, to the persons who, formerly interested by the engravings from him, imagined half the merit was of the engraver's giving. But I know perfectly that to the general people, trained in the midst of the ugliest objects that vice can design, in houses, mills, and machinery, *all* beautiful form and colour is as invisible as the seventh heaven. It is not a question of appreciation at all; the thing is physically invisible to them, as human speech is inaudible during a steam whistle.

And I shall also use all the strength I have to convince those, among our artists of the second order, who are wise and modest enough not to think themselves the matches of Turner or Michael Angelo, that in the present state of art they only waste their powers in endeavouring to produce original pictures of human form or passion. Modern aristocratic life is too vulgar, and modern peasant life too unhappy, to furnish subjects of noble study; while, even were it otherwise, the multiplication of designs by painters of second-rate power is no more desirable than the writing of music by inferior composers. They may, with far

greater personal happiness, and incalculably greater advantage to others, devote themselves to the affectionate and sensitive copying of the works of men of just renown. The dignity of this self-sacrifice would soon be acknowledged with sincere respect, for copies produced by men working with such motive would differ no less from the common trade-article of the galleries than the rendering of music by an enthusiastic and highly-trained executant differs from the grinding of a street organ. And the change in the tone of public feeling, produced by familiarity with such work, would soon be no less great than in their musical enjoyment, if having been accustomed only to hear black Christys, blind fiddlers, and hoarse beggars scrape or howl about their streets, they were permitted daily audience of faithful and gentle orchestral rendering of the work of the highest classical masters.

I have not, until very lately, rightly appreciated the results of the labour of the Arundel Society in this direction. Although, from the beginning, I have been honoured in being a member of its council, my action has been hitherto rather of check than help, because I thought more of the differences between our copies and the great originals, than of their unquestionable superiority to anything the public could otherwise obtain.

I was practically convinced of their extreme value only this last winter, by staying at the house of a friend in which the Arundel engravings were the principal decoration; and where I learned more of Masaccio from the

Arundel copy of the contest with Simon Magus, than in the Brancacci chapel itself; for the daily companionship with the engraving taught me subtleties in its composition which had escaped me in the multitudinous interest of visits to the actual fresco.

But the work of the Society has been sorely hindered hitherto, because it has had at command only the skill of copyists trained in foreign schools of colour, and accustomed to meet no more accurate requisitions than those of the fashionable traveller. I have always hoped for, and trust at last to obtain, co-operation with our too mildly laborious copyists, of English artists possessing more brilliant colour faculty; and the permission of our subscribers to secure for them the great ruins of the noble past, undesecrated by the trim, but treacherous, plastering of modern emendation.

Finally, I hope to direct some of the antiquarian energy often to be found remaining, even when love of the picturesque has passed away, to encourage the accurate delineation and engraving of historical monuments, as a direct function of our schools of art. All that I have generally to suggest on this matter has been already stated with sufficient clearness in the first of my inaugural lectures at Oxford: and my forthcoming 'Elements of Drawing' will contain all the directions I can give in writing as to methods of work for such purpose. The publication of these has been hindered, for at least a year, by the abuses introduced by the modern cheap modes

of printing engravings. I find the men won't use any ink but what pleases them, nor print but with what pressure pleases them; and if I can get the foreman to attend to the business, and choose the ink right, the men change it the moment he leaves the room, and threaten to throw up the job when they are detected. All this, I have long known well, is a matter of course, in the outcome of modern principles of trade; but it has rendered it hitherto impossible for me to produce illustrations, which have been ready, as far as my work or that of my own assistants is concerned, for a year and a half. Any one interested in hearing of our progress—or arrest, may write to my Turner copyist, Mr. Ward : * and, in the meantime, they can help my designs for art education best by making these Turner copies more generally known; and by determining, when they travel, to spend what sums they have at their disposal, not in fady photography, but in the encouragement of any good *water-colour* and *pencil* draughtsmen whom they find employed in the *galleries* of Europe.

* 2, Church Terrace, Richmond, Surrey. NOTE.—I have hitherto permitted Mr. Ward to copy any Turner drawing he was asked to do; but, finding there is a run upon the vignettes of Loch Lomond and Derwent, I have forbidden him to do more of them for the present, lest his work should get the least mechanical. The admirable drawings of Venice, by my good assistant Mr. Bunney, resident there, will become of more value to their purchasers every year, as the buildings from which they are made are destroyed. I was but just in time, working with him at Verona, to catch record of Fra Giocondo's work in the smaller square; the most beautiful Renaissance design in North Italy.

ARTICLE II.

DETACHED NOTES.

I.

On the series of Sibyl engravings attributed to Botticelli.

SINCE I wrote the earlier lectures in this volume, I have been made more doubtful on several points which were embarrassing enough before, by seeing some better, (so-called,) impressions of my favourite plates, containing light and shade which did not improve them.

I do not choose to waste time or space in discussion, till I know more of the matter; and that more I must leave to my good friend Mr. Reid of the British Museum to find out for me; for I have no time to take up the subject myself, but I give, for frontispiece to this Appendix, the engraving of Joshua referred to in the text, which however beautiful in thought, is an example of the inferior execution and more elaborate shade which puzzle me. But whatever is said in the previous pages of the plates chosen for example, by whomsoever done, is absolutely trustworthy. Thoroughly fine they are, in their existing state, and exemplary to all persons and times

And of the rest, in fitting place I hope to give complete—or at least satisfactory account.

II.

On the three excellent engravers representative of the first, middle, and late schools.

I have given opposite a photograph, slightly reduced from the Durer Madonna, alluded to often in the text, as an example of his best conception of womanhood. It is very curious that Durer, the least able of all great artists to represent womanhood, should of late have been a very principal object of feminine admiration. The last thing a woman should do is to write about art. They never see anything in pictures but what they are told, (or resolve to see out of contradiction,)—or the particular things that fall in with their own feelings. I saw a curious piece of enthusiastic writing by an Edinburgh lady, the other day, on the photographs I had taken from the tower of Giotto. She did not care a straw what Giotto had meant by them, declared she felt it her duty only to announce what they were to *her*; and wrote two pages on the bas-relief of Heracles and Antæus—assuming it to be the death of Abel.

It is not, however, by women only that Durer has been over-praised. He stands so alone in his own field, that the people who care much for him generally lose the power of enjoying anything else rightly; and are continu

ally attributing to the force of his imagination quaintnesses which are merely part of the general mannerism of his day.

The following notes upon him, in relation to two other excellent engravers, were written shortly for extempore expansion in lecturing. I give them, with the others in this terminal article, mainly for use to myself in future reference; but also as more or less suggestive to the reader, if he has taken up the subject seriously, and worth, therefore, a few pages of this closing sheet.

The men I have named as representative of all the good ones composing their school, are alike resolved their engraving shall be lovely.

But Botticelli, the ancient, wants, with as little engraving, as much Sibyl as possible.

Durer, the central, wants, with as much engraving as possible, anything of Sibyl that may chance to be picked up with it.

Beaugrand, the modern, wants, as much Sibyl as possible, and as much engraving too.

I repeat—for I want to get this clear to you—Botticelli wants, with as little engraving, as much Sibyl as possible. For his head is full of Sibyls, and his heart. He can't draw them fast enough: one comes, and another and another; and all, gracious and wonderful and good, to be engraved for ever, if only he had a thousand hands and lives. He scratches down one, with no haste, with no fault, divinely careful, scrupulous, patient, but with as few

lines as possible. 'Another Sibyl—let me draw another for heaven's sake, before she has burnt all her books, and vanished.'

Durer is exactly Botticelli's opposite. He is a work man, to the heart, and will do his work magnificently 'No matter what I do it on, so that my craft be honourably shown. Anything will do; a Sibyl, a skull, a Madonna and Christ, a hat and feather, an Adam, an Eve, a cock, a sparrow, a lion with two tails, a pig with five legs,—anything will do for me. But see if I don't show you what engraving is, be my subject what it may'!

Thirdly: Beangrand, I said, wants as much Sibyl as possible, and as much engraving. He is essentially a copyist, and has no ideas of his own, but deep reverence and love for the work of others. He will give his life to represent another man's thought. He will do his best with every spot and line,—exhibit to you; if you will only look, the most exquisite completion of obedient skill; but will be content, if you will not look, to pass his neglected years in fruitful peace, and count every day well spent that has given softness to a shadow, or light to a smile.

III.

On Durer's landscape, with reference to the sentence in p. 159: "I hope you are pleased."

I spoke just now only of the ill-shaped body of this figure of Fortune, or Pleasure. Beneath her feet is an

elaborate landscape. It is all drawn out of Durer's head ;—he would look at bones or tendons carefully, or at the leaf details of foreground ;—but at the breadth and loveliness of real landscape, never.

He has tried to give you a bird's-eye view of Germany ; rocks, and woods, and clouds, and brooks, and the pebbles in their beds, and mills, and cottages, and fences, and what not ; but it is all a feverish dream, ghastly and strange, a monotone of diseased imagination.

And here is a little bit of the world he would not look at—of the great river of his land, with a single cluster of its reeds, and two boats, and an island with a village, and the way for the eternal waters opened between the rounded hills.*

It is just what you may see any day, anywhere,—innocent, seemingly artless ; but the artlessness of Turner is like the face of Gainsborough's village girl, and a joy forever.

IV.

On the study of anatomy.

The virtual beginner of artistic anatomy in Italy was a man called 'The Poulterer,'—from his grandfather's

* The engraving of Turner's "Scene on the Rhine" (near Bingen?) with boats on the right, and reedy foreground on left ; the opening between its mountain banks in central distance. It is exquisitely engraved, the plate being of the size of the drawing, about ten inches by six, and finished with extreme care and feeling.

trade; 'Pollajuolo,' a man of immense power, but on whom the curse of the Italian mind in this age* was set at its deepest.

Any form of passionate excess has terrific effects on body and soul, in nations as in men; and when this excess is in rage, and rage against your brother, and rage accomplished in habitual deeds of blood,—do you think Nature will forget to set the seal of her indignation upon the forehead? I told you that the great division of spirit between the northern and southern races had been reconciled in the Val d'Arno. The Font of Florence, and the Font of Pisa, were as the very springs of the life of the Christianity which had gone forth to teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Prince of Peace. Yet these two brother cities were to each other—I do not say as Abel and Cain, but as Eteocles and Polynices, and the words of *Æschylus* are now fulfilled in them to the uttermost. The Arno baptizes their dead bodies:—their native valley between its mountains is to them as the furrow of a grave;—"and so much of their land they have, as is sepulchre." Nay, not of Florence and Pisa only was this true: Venice and Genoa died in death-grapple; and eight cities of Lombardy divided between them the joy of levelling Milan to her lowest stone. Nay, not merely in city against city, but in street against street, and house

* See the horrible picture of St. Sebastian by him in our own National Gallery.

against house, the fury of the Theban dragon flamed ceaselessly, and with the same excuse upon men's lips The sign of the shield of Polynices, Justice bringing back the exile, was to them all, in turn, the portent of death: and their history, in the sum of it and substance, is as of the servants of Joab and Abner by the pool of Gibeon. "They caught every one his fellow by the head, and thrust his sword in his fellow's side; so they fell down together: wherefore that place was called 'the field of the strong men:'"

Now it is not possible for Christian men to live, thus, except under a fever of insanity. I have before, in my lectures on Prudence and Insolence in art, deliberately asserted to you the logical accuracy of the term 'demoniacal possession'—the being in the power or possession of a betraying spirit; and the definite sign of such insanity is delight in witnessing pain, usually accompanied by an instinct that gloats over or plays with physical uncleanness or disease, and always by a morbid egotism. It is not to be recognized for demoniacal power so much by its *viciousness*, as its *paltriness*,—the taking pleasure in minute, contemptible, and loathsome things.* Now, in the middle of the gallery of the Brera at Milan, there is an elaborate study of a dead Christ, entirely characteristic of early fifteenth century Italian madman's work. It is

* As in the muscles of the legs and effort in stretching bows, of the executioners, in the picture just referred to.

called—and was presented to the people as—a Christ; but it is only an anatomical study of a vulgar and ghastly dead body, with the soles of the feet set straight at the spectator, and the rest foreshortened. It is either Castagno's or Mantegna's,—in my mind, set down to Castagno; but I have not looked at the picture for years, and am not sure at this moment. It does not matter a straw which: it is exactly characteristic of the madness in which all of them—Pollajuolo, Castagno, Mantegna, Lionardo da Vinci, and Michael Angelo, polluted their work with the science of the sepulchre,* and degraded it

* Observe, I entirely distinguish the study of *anatomy*—i.e., of intense bone and muscle—from study of the nude, as the Greeks practised it. This for an entirely great painter is absolutely necessary; but yet I believe, in the case of Botticelli, it was nobly restricted. The following note by Mr. Tyrwhitt contains, I think, the probable truth:—

“The facts relating to Sandro Botticelli's models, or rather to his favourite model (as it appears to me), are but few; and it is greatly to be regretted that his pictures are seldom dated;—if it were certain in what order they appeared, what follows here might approach moral certainty.

“There is no doubt that he had great personal regard for Fra Filippo, up to that painter's death in 1469, Sandro being then twenty-two years old. He may probably have got only good from him; anyhow he would get a strong turn for Realism,—i.e., the treatment of sacred and all other subjects in a realistic manner. He is described in Crowe and Cavalcaselle from Filippino Lippi's Martyrdom of St. Peter, as a sullen and sensual man, with beetle brows, large fleshy mouth, etc., etc. Probably he was a strong man, and intense in physical and intellectual habit.

with presumptuous and paltry technical skill. Fore shorten your Christ, and paint him, if you can, half putrified,—that is the scientific art of the Renaissance.

It is impossible, however, in so vast a subject to dis

“ This man, then, begins to paint in his strength, with conviction—rather happy and innocent than not—that it is right to paint any beautiful thing, and best to paint the most beautiful,—say in 1470, at twenty-three years of age. The allegorical Spring and the Graces, and the Aphrodite now in the Ufficii, were painted for Cosmo, and seem to be taken by Vasari and others as early, or early-central, works in his life: also the portrait of Simonetta Vespucci.¹ He is known to have painted much in early life for the Vespucci and the Medici;—and this daughter of the former house seems to have been innamorata or mistress of Giuliano de’ Medici, murdered by the Pazzi in 1478. Now it seems agreed by Crowe and Cavalcaselle, Pater, etc., (and I am quite sure of it myself as to the pictures mentioned)—first, that the same slender and long-throated model appears in Spring, the Aphrodite, Calumny, and other works.² Secondly, that she was Simonetta, the original of the Pitti portrait.

“ Now I think she must have been induced to let Sandro draw from her whole person undraped, more or less; and that he must have done so as such a man probably would, in strict honour as to deed, word, and definite thought, but under occasional accesses of passion of which he said nothing, and which in all probability and by grace of God refined down to nil, or nearly so, as he got accustomed to look in honour at so beautiful a thing. (He may have left off the undraped after her death.) First, her figure is absolutely fine Gothic; I don’t think any antique is so slender. Secondly, she has the sad, passionate, and exquisite Lombard mouth. Thirdly, her limbs shrink together, and she

¹ Pitti, Stanza di Prometeo, 348.

² I think Zipporah may be a remembrance of her.

tinguish always the beginner of things from the establisher. To the poulterer's son, Pollajuolo, remains the eternal shame of first making insane contest the only subject of art; but the two *establishers* of anatomy were

seems not quite to have 'liked it,' or been an accustomed model. Fourthly, there is tradition, giving her name to all those forms.

"Her lover Giuliano was murdered in 1478, and Savonarola hanged and burnt in 1498. Now, can her distress, and Savonarola's preaching, between them, have taken, in few years, all the carnality out of Sandro, supposing him to have come already, by seventy-eight, to that state in which the sight of her delighted him, without provoking ulterior feelings? All decent men accustomed to draw from the nude tell us they get to that.

"Sandro's Dante is dated as published in 1482. He may have been saddening by that time, and weary of beauty, pure or mixed;—though he went on painting Madonnas, I fancy. (Can Simonetta be traced in any of them? I think not. The Sistine paintings extend from 1481 to 1484, however. I cannot help thinking Zipporah is impressed with her.) After Savonarola's death, Sandro must have lost heart, and gone into Dante altogether. Most ways in literature and art lead to Dante; and this question about the nude and the purity of Botticelli is no exception to the rule.

"Now in the Purgatorio, Lust is the last sin of which we are to be made pure, and it has to be burnt out of us: being itself as searching as fire, as smouldering, devouring, and all that. *Corruptio optimi pessima*: and it is the most searching and lasting of evils, because it really is a corruption attendant on true Love, which is eternal—whatever the word means. That this is so, seems to me to demonstrate the truth of the Fall of Man from the condition of moral very-goodness in God's sight. And I think that Dante connected the purifying pains of his intermediate state with actual sufferings in this life, working out repentance,—in himself and others. And the 'torment' of this passion, to

Lionardo and Michael Angelo. You hear of Lionardo chiefly because of his Last Supper, but Italy did not hear of him for that. This was not what brought *her* to worship Lionardo—but the Battle of the Standard.

V.

Fragments on Holbein and others.

Of Holbein's St. Elizabeth, remember, she is not a perfect Saint Elizabeth, by any means. She is an honest and sweet German lady,—the best he could see ; he could do

the repentant or resisting, or purity-seeking soul is decidedly like the pain of physical burning.

“ Further, its casuistry is impracticable ; because the more you stir the said ‘ fire,’ the stronger hold it takes. Therefore, men and women are *rightly* secret about it, and detailed confessions unadvisable. Much talk about ‘ hypocrisy’ in this matter is quite wrong and unjust. Then, its connexion with female beauty, as a cause of love between man and woman, seems to me to be the inextricable nodus of the Fall, the here inseparable mixture of good and evil, till soul and body are parted. For the sense of seen Beauty is the awakening of Love, at whatever distance from any kind of return or sympathy—as with a rose, or what not. Sandro may be the man who has gone nearest to the right separation of Delight from Desire : supposing that he began with religion and a straight conscience ; saw lovingly the error of Fra Filippo's way ; saw with intense distant love the error of Simonetta's ; and reflected on Florence and *its* way, and drew nearer and nearer to Savonarola, being yet too big a man for asceticism ; and finally wearied of all things, and sunk into poverty and peace.”

no better ;—and so I come back to my old story,—no man can do better than he sees : if he can reach the nature round him, it is well ; he may fall short of it ; he cannot rise above it ; “ the best, in this kind, are but shadows.”

* * * *

Yet that intense veracity of Holbein is indeed the strength and glory of all the northern schools. They exist only in being true. Their work among men is the definition of what *is*, and the abiding by it. They cannot dream of what is not. They make fools of themselves if they try. Think how feeble even Shakspeare is when he tries his hand at a Goddess ;—women, beautiful and womanly,—as many as you choose ; but who cares what his Minerva or Juno, say in the masque of the *Tempest* ? And for the painters—when Sir Joshua tries for a *Madonna*, or Vandyke for a *Diana*—they can't even *paint* ! they become total simpletons. Look at Rubens' mythologies in the Louvre, or at modern French heroics, or German pietisms ! Why, all—Cornelius, Hesse, Overbeck, and David—put together, are not worth one De Hooghe of an old woman with a broom sweeping a back-kitchen. The one thing we northerns can do is to find out what is fact, and insist on it : mean fact it may be, or noble,—but fact always, or we die.

Yet the intensest form of northern realization can be matched in the south, when the southernns choose. There are two pieces of animal drawing in the Sistine Chapel

unrivalled for literal veracity. The sheep at the well in front of Zipporah; and afterwards, when she is going away, leading her children, her eldest boy, like every one else, has taken his chief treasure with him, and this treasure is his pet dog. It is a little sharp-nosed white fox-terrier, full of fire and life; but not strong enough for a long walk. So little Gershom, whose name was "the stranger" because his father had been a stranger in a strange land,—little Gershom carries his white terrier under his arm, lying on the top of a large bundle to make it comfortable. The doggie puts its sharp nose and bright eyes out, above his hand, with a little roguish gleam sideways in them, which means,—if I can read rightly a dog's expression,—that he has been barking at Moses all the morning, and has nearly put him out of temper:—and without any doubt, I can assert to you that there is not any other such piece of animal painting in the world,—so brief, intense, vivid, and absolutely balanced in truth; as tenderly drawn as if it had been a saint, yet as humorously as Landseer's Lord Chancellor poodle.

Oppose to Holbein's Veracity—Botticelli's Fantasy.

"	"	Shade	"	Colour.
"	"	Despair	"	Faith.
"	"	Grossness	"	Purity.

True Fantasy. Botticelli's Tree in Hellespontic Sibyl.
Not a real tree at all—yet founded on intensest percep

tion of beautiful reality. So the swan of Clio, as opposed to Durer's cock, or to Turner's swan.

The Italian power of abstraction into one mythologic personage—Holbein's death is only literal. He has to split his death into thirty different deaths; and each is but a skeleton. But Orcagna's death is one—the power of death itself. There may thus be as much *breadth in thought*, as in execution.

* * * *

What then, we have to ask, is a man *conscious of* in what he sees?

For instance, in all Cruikshank's etchings—however slight the outline—there is an intense consciousness of light and shade, and of local colour, *as a part* of light and shade; but none of colour itself. He was wholly incapable of colouring; and perhaps this very deficiency enabled him to give graphic harmony to engraving.

* * * *

Bewick—snow-pieces, etc. *Grey* predominant; *perfect sense of colour*, coming out in patterns of birds;—yet so uncultivated, that he engraves the brown birds better than pheasant or peacock!

For quite perfect consciousness of colour makes engraving impossible, and you have instead—Correggio.

VI.

Final notes on light and shade.

You will find in the 138th and 147th paragraphs of my inaugural lectures, statements which, if you were reading the book by yourselves, would strike you probably as each of them difficult, and in some degree inconsistent,—namely, that the school of colour has exquisite character and sentiment; but is childish, cheerful, and fantastic; while the school of shade is deficient in character and sentiment; but supreme in intellect and veracity. “The way by light and shade,” I say, “is taken by men of the highest powers of thought and most earnest desire for truth.”

The school of shade, I say, is deficient in character and sentiment. Compare any of Durer’s Madonnas with any of Angelico’s.

Yet you may discern in the Apocalypse engravings that Durer’s mind was seeking for truths, and dealing with questions, which no more could have occurred to Angelico’s mind than to that of a two-years’-old baby.

The two schools unite in various degrees; but are always distinguishably generic, the two headmost masters representing each being Tintoret and Perugino. The one, deficient in sentiment, and continually offending us by the want of it, but full of intellectual power and suggestion.

The other, repeating ideas with so little reflection that he gets blamed for doing the same thing over again,

(Vasari); but exquisite in sentiment and the conditions of taste which it forms, so as to become the master of it to Raphael and to all succeeding him; and remaining such a type of sentiment, too delicate to be felt by the latter practical mind of Dutch-bred England, that Goldsmith makes the admiration of him the test of absurd connoisseurship. But yet, with under-current of intellect, which gets him accused of free-thinking, and therefore with under-current of entirely exquisite chiaroscuro.

Light and shade, then, imply the understanding of things—Colour, the imagination and the sentiment of them.

In Turner's distinctive work, colour is scarcely acknowledged unless under influence of sunshine. The sunshine is his treasure; his lividest gloom contains it; his greyest twilight regrets it, and remembers. Blue is always a blue shadow; brown or gold, always light;—nothing is cheerful but sunshine; wherever the sun is not, there is melancholy or evil. Apollo is God; and all forms of death and sorrow exist in opposition to him.

But in Perugino's distinctive work,—and therefore I have given him the captain's place over all,—there is simply *no* darkness, *no* wrong. Every colour is lovely, and every space is light. The world, the universe, is divine: all sadness is a part of harmony; and all gloom, a part of peace.

FORS CLAVIGERA.

LETTERS

TO THE WORKMEN AND LABOURERS OF
GREAT BRITAIN.

By JOHN RUSKIN, LL.D.

PART I.

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FORS CLAVIGERA.

LETTER I.

DENMARK HILL,

1st January, 1871.

FRIENDS,

WE begin to-day another group of ten years, not in happy circumstances. Although, for the time, exempted from the direct calamities which have fallen on neighbouring states, believe me, we have not escaped them because of our better deservings, nor by our better wisdom; but only for one of two bad reasons, or for both: either that we have not sense enough to determine in a great national quarrel which side is right, or that we have not courage to defend the right, when we have discerned it.

I believe that both these bad reasons exist in full force; that our own political divisions prevent us from understanding the laws of international justice; and that, even if we did, we should not dare to defend, perhaps not even to assert them, being on this first of January, 1871, in much bodily fear; that is to say, afraid of the Russians; afraid of the Prussians; afraid of the Americans; afraid of the Hindoos; afraid of the Chinese; afraid of the

Japanese ; afraid of the New Zealanders ; and afraid of the Caffres : and very justly so, being conscious that our only real desire respecting any of these nations has been to get as much out of them as we could.

They have no right to complain of us, notwithstanding, since we have all, lately, lived ourselves in the daily endeavour to get as much out of our neighbours and friends as we could ; and having by this means, indeed, got a good deal out of each other, and put nothing into each other, the actually obtained result, this day, is a state of emptiness in purse and stomach, for the solace of which our boasted “insular position” is ineffectual.

I have listened to many ingenious persons, who say we are better off now than ever we were before. I do not know how well off we were before ; but I know positively that many very deserving persons of my acquaintance have great difficulty in living under these improved circumstances : also, that my desk is full of begging letters, eloquently written either by distressed or dishonest people ; and that we cannot be called, as a nation, well off, while so many of us are living either in honest or in villanous beggary.

For my own part, I will put up with this state of things, passively, not an hour longer. I am not an unselfish person, nor an Evangelical one ; I have no particular pleasure in doing good ; neither do I dislike doing it so much as to expect to be rewarded for it in another world. But I simply cannot paint, nor read, nor look at minerals, nor do anything else that I like, and the very light of the morning

sky, when there is any—which is seldom, now-a-days, near London—has become hateful to me, because of the misery that I know of, and see signs of, where I know it not, which no imagination can interpret too bitterly.

Therefore, as I have said, I will endure it no longer quietly; but henceforward, with any few or many who will help, do my poor best to abate this misery. But that I may do my best, I must not be miserable myself any longer; for no man who is wretched in his own heart, and feeble in his own work, can rightly help others.

Now my own special pleasure has lately been connected with a given duty. I have been ordered to endeavour to make our English youth care somewhat for the arts; and must put my uttermost strength into that business. To which end I must clear myself from all sense of responsibility for the material distress around me, by explaining to you, once for all, in the shortest English I can, what I know of its causes; by pointing out to you some of the methods by which it might be relieved; and by setting aside regularly some small percentage of my income, to assist, as one of yourselves, in what one and all we shall have to do; each of us laying by something, according to our means, for the common service; and having amongst us, at last, be it ever so small, a national Store instead of a National Debt. Store which, once securely founded, will fast increase, provided only you take the pains to understand, and have perseverance to maintain, the elementary principles of Human Economy, which have, of late, not

only been lost sight of, but wilfully and formally entombed under pyramids of falsehood.

And first I beg you most solemnly to convince yourselves of the partly comfortable, partly formidable fact, that your prosperity is in your own hands. That only in a remote degree does it depend on external matters, and least of all, on forms of Government. In all times of trouble the first thing to be done is to make the most of whatever forms of government you have got, by setting honest men to work them; (the trouble, in all probability, having arisen only from the want of such); and for the rest, you must in no wise concern yourselves about them: more particularly it would be lost time to do so at this moment, when whatever is popularly said about governments cannot but be absurd, for want of definition of terms. Consider, for instance, the ridiculousness of the division of parties into "Liberal" and "Conservative." There is no opposition whatever between those two kinds of men. There is opposition between Liberals and Illiberals; that is to say, between people who desire liberty, and who dislike it. I am a violent Illiberal; but it does not follow that I must be a Conservative. A Conservative is a person who wishes to keep things as they are; and he is opposed to a Destructive, who wishes to destroy them, or to an Innovator, who wishes to alter them. Now, though I am an Illiberal, there are many things I should like to destroy. I should like to destroy most of the railroads in England, and all the railroads in Wales. I should like to destroy and

rebuild the Houses of Parliament, the National Gallery, and the East end of London; and to destroy, without rebuilding, the new town of Edinburgh, the north suburb of Geneva, and the city of New York. Thus in many things I am the reverse of Conservative; nay, there are some long-established things which I hope to see changed before I die; but I want still to keep the fields of England green, and her cheeks red; and that girls should be taught to curtsy, and boys to take their hats off, when a professor or otherwise dignified person passes by: and that kings should keep their crowns on their heads, and bishops their crosiers in their hands; and should duly recognize the significance of the crown, and the use of the crook.

As you would find it thus impossible to class me justly in either party, so you would find it impossible to class any person whatever, who had clear and developed political opinions, and who could define them accurately. Men only associate in parties by sacrificing their opinions, or by having none worth sacrificing; and the effect of party government is always to develop hostilities and hypocrisies, and to extinguish ideas.

Thus the so-called Monarchic and Republican parties have thrown Europe into conflagration and shame, merely for want of clear conception of the things they imagine themselves to fight for. The moment a Republic was proclaimed in France, Garibaldi came to fight for it as a "Holy Republic." But Garibaldi could not know,—no mortal creature could know,—whether it was going to be

a Holy or Profane Republic. You cannot evoke any form of government by beat of drum. The proclamation of a Government implies the considerate acceptance of a code of laws, and the appointment of means for their execution, neither of which things can be done in an instant. You may overthrow a government, and announce yourselves lawless, in the twinkling of an eye, as you can blow up a ship, or upset and sink one. But you can no more create a government with a word, than an iron-clad.

No; nor can you even define its character in few words; the measure of sanctity in it depending on degrees of justice in the administration of law, which are often independent of form altogether. Generally speaking, the community of thieves in London or Paris have adopted Republican Institutions, and live at this day without any acknowledged Captain or Head; but under Robin Hood, brigandage in England, and under Sir John Hawkwood, brigandage in Italy, became strictly Monarchical. Theft could not, merely by that dignified form of government, be made a holy manner of life; but it was made both dexterous and decorous. The pages of the English knights under Sir John Hawkwood spent nearly all their spare time in burnishing the knights' armour, and made it always so bright, that they were called "the White Company." And the Notary of Tortona, Azario, tells us of them, that those foragers (*furatores*,) "were more expert than any plunderers in Lombardy. They for the most part sleep "by day, and watch by night, and have such plans and

“artifices for taking towns, that never were the like or
“equal of them witnessed.” *

The actual Prussian expedition into France merely differs from Sir John's in Italy by being more generally savage, much less enjoyable, and by its clumsier devices for taking towns; for Sir John had no occasion to burn their libraries. In neither case does the monarchical form of government bestow any Divine right of theft; but it puts the available forces into a convenient form. Even with respect to convenience only, it is not yet determinable by the evidence of history, what is absolutely the best form of government to live under. There are, indeed, said to be republican villages, (towns?) in America, where everybody is civil, honest, and substantially comfortable, but these villages have several unfair advantages—there are no lawyers in them, no town councils, and no parliaments. Such republicanism, if possible on a large scale, would be worth fighting for; though, in my own private mind, I confess I should like to keep a few lawyers, for the sake of their wigs—and the faces under them—generally very grand when they are really good lawyers—and for their (unprofessional) talk. Also, I should like to have a Parliament, into which people might be elected on condition of their never saying anything about politics, that one might still feel sometimes that one was acquainted

* Communicated to me by my friend Mr. Rawdon Brown, of Venice from his yet unpublished work *‘The English in Italy in the 14th Century.’*

with an M.P. In the meantime Parliament is a luxury to the British squire, and an honour to the British manufacturer, which you may leave them to enjoy in their own way; provided only you make them always clearly explain, when they tax you, what they want with your money; and that you understand yourselves, what money is, and how it is got, and what it is good for, and bad for.

These matters I hope to explain to you in this and some following letters; which, among various other reasons, it is necessary that I should write in order that you may make no mistake as to the real economical results of Art teaching, whether in the Universities or elsewhere. I will begin by directing your attention particularly to that point.

The first object of all work—not the principal one, but the first and necessary one—is to get food, clothes, lodging, and fuel.

It is quite possible to have too much of all these things. I know a great many gentlemen, who eat too large dinners; a great many ladies, who have too many clothes. I know there is lodging to spare in London, for I have several houses there myself, which I can't let. And I know there is fuel to spare everywhere, since we get up steam to pound the roads with, while our men stand idle; or drink till they can't stand, idle, or any otherwise.

Notwithstanding, there is agonizing distress even in this highly-favoured England, in some classes, for want of food, clothes, lodging, and fuel. And it has become a popular

idea among the benevolent and ingenious, that you may in great part remedy these deficiencies by teaching, to these starving and shivering persons, Science and Art. In their way—as I do not doubt you will believe—I am very fond of both; and I am sure it will be beneficial for the British nation to be lectured upon the merits of Michael Angelo, and the nodes of the Moon. But I should strongly object myself to being lectured on either, while I was hungry and cold; and I suppose the same view of the matter would be taken by the greater number of British citizens in those predicaments. So that, I am convinced, their present eagerness for instruction in painting and astronomy proceeds from an impression in their minds that, somehow, they may paint or star-gaze themselves into clothes and victuals. Now it is perfectly true that you may sometimes sell a picture for a thousand pounds; but the chances are greatly against your doing so—much more than the chances of a lottery. In the first place, you must paint a very clever picture; and the chances are greatly against your doing that. In the second place, you must meet with an amiable picture-dealer; and the chances are somewhat against your doing that. In the third place, the amiable picture-dealer must meet with a fool; and the chances are not always in favour even of his doing that—though, as I gave exactly the sum in question for a picture, myself, only the other day, it is not for me to say so. Assume, however, to put the case most favourably, that what with the practical results of the energies of Mr. Cole at Kensing

ton, and the æsthetic impressions produced by various lectures at Cambridge and Oxford, the profits of art employment might be counted on as a rateable income. Suppose even that the ladies of the richer classes should come to delight no less in new pictures than in new dresses; and that picture-making should thus become as constant and lucrative an occupation as dress-making. Still, you know, they can't buy pictures and dresses too. If they buy two pictures a day, they can't buy two dresses a day; or if they do, they must save in something else. They have but a certain income, be it never so large. They spend that, now; and you can't get more out of them. Even if they lay by money, the time comes when somebody must spend it. You will find that they do verily spend now all they have, neither more nor less. If ever they seem to spend more, it is only by running in debt and not paying; if they for a time spend less, some day the overplus must come into circulation. All they have, they spend; more than that, they cannot at any time: less than that, they can only for a short time.

Whenever, therefore, any new industry, such as this of picture-making, is invented, of which the profits depend on patronage, it merely means that you have effected a diversion of the current of money in your own favour, and to somebody else's loss. Nothing really has been gained by the nation, though probably much time and wit, as well as sundry people's senses, have been lost. Before such a diversion can be effected, a great many kind things must

have been done; a great deal of excellent advice given; and an immense quantity of ingenious trouble taken: the arithmetical course of the business throughout, being, that for every penny you are yourself better, somebody else is a penny the worse; and the net result of the whole precisely zero.

Zero, of course, I mean, so far as money is concerned. It may be more dignified for working women to paint than to embroider; and it may be a very charming piece of self-denial, in a young lady, to order a high art fresco instead of a ball-dress; but as far as cakes and ale are concerned, it is all the same,—there is but so much money to be got by you, or spent by her, and not one farthing more, usually a great deal less, by high art, than by low. Zero, also, observe, I mean partly in a complimentary sense to the work executed. If you have done no good by painting, at least you have done no serious mischief. A bad picture is indeed a dull thing to have in a house, and in a certain sense a mischievous thing; but it won't blow the roof off. Whereas, of most things which the English, French, and Germans are paid for making now-a-days,—cartridges, cannon, and the like,—you know the best thing we can possibly hope is that they *may* be useless, and the net result of them, zero.

The thing, therefore, that you have to ascertain, approximately, in order to determine on some consistent organization, is the maximum of wages-fund you have to depend on to start with, that is to say, virtually, the sum of the

income of the gentlemen of England. Do not trouble yourselves at first about France or Germany, or any other foreign country. The principle of Free-trade is, that French gentlemen should employ English workmen, for whatever the English can do better than the French; and that English gentlemen should employ French workmen, for whatever the French can do better than the English. It is a very right principle, but merely extends the question to a wider field. Suppose, for the present, that France, and every other country but your own, were—what I suppose you would, if you had your way, like them to be—sunk under water, and that England were the only country in the world. Then, how would you live in it most comfortably? Find out that, and you will then easily find out how two countries can exist together; or more, not only without need for fighting, but to each other's advantage.

For, indeed, the laws by which two next-door neighbours might live most happily—the one not being the better for his neighbour's poverty, but the worse, and the better for his neighbour's prosperity—are those also by which it is convenient and wise for two parishes, two provinces or two kingdoms to live side by side. And the nature of every commercial and military operation which takes place in Europe, or in the world, may always be best investigated by supposing it limited to the districts of a single country. Kent and Northumberland exchange hops and coals on precisely the same economical principles as Italy and England exchange oil for iron; and the

essential character of the war between Germany and France may be best understood by supposing it a dispute between Lancashire and Yorkshire for the line of the Ribble. Suppose that Lancashire, having absorbed Cumberland and Cheshire, and been much insulted and troubled by Yorkshire in consequence, and at last attacked; and having victoriously repulsed the attack, and retaining old grudges against Yorkshire, about the colour of roses, from the 15th century, declares that it cannot possibly be safe against the attacks of Yorkshire any longer, unless it gets the townships of Giggleswick and Wigglesworth, and a fortress on Pen-y-gent. Yorkshire replying that this is totally inadmissible, and that it will eat its last horse, and perish to its last Yorkshireman, rather than part with a stone of Giggleswick, a crag of Pen-y-gent, or a ripple of Ribble,—Lancashire with its Cumbrian and Cheshire contingents invades Yorkshire, and meeting with much Divine assistance, ravages the West Riding, and besieges York on Christmas Day. That is the actual gist of the whole business; and in the same manner you may see the downright common-sense—if any is to be seen—of other human proceedings, by taking them first under narrow and homely conditions. So for the present, we will fancy ourselves, what you tell me you all want to be, independent: we will take no account of any other country but Britain; and on that condition I will begin to show you in my next paper how we ought to live, after ascertaining the utmost limits of the wages-fund, which means the income of our gentle

men; that is to say, essentially, the income of those who have command of the land, and therefore of all food.

What you call "wages," practically, is the quantity of food which the possessor of the land gives you, to work for him. There is finally, no "capital" but that. If all the money of all the capitalists in the whole world were destroyed; the notes and bills burnt, the gold irrecoverably buried, and all the machines and apparatus of manufactures crushed, by a mistake in signals, in one catastrophe; and nothing remained but the land, with its animals and vegetables, and buildings for shelter,—the poorer population would be very little worse off than they are at this instant; and their labour, instead of being "limited" by the destruction, would be greatly stimulated. They would feed themselves from the animals and growing crops; heap here and there a few tons of ironstone together, build rough walls round them to get a blast, and in a fortnight they would have iron tools again, and be ploughing and fighting, just as usual. It is only we who had the capital who would suffer; we should not be able to live idle, as we do now, and many of us—I, for instance—should starve at once: but you, though little the worse, would none of you be the better, eventually, for our loss—or starvation. The removal of superfluous mouths would indeed benefit you somewhat, for a time; but you would soon replace them with hungrier ones; and there are many of us who are quite worth our meat to you in different ways, which I will explain in due place: also I

will show you that our money is really likely to be useful to you in its accumulated form, (besides that, in the instances when it has been won by work, it justly belongs to us), so only that you are careful never to let us persuade you into borrowing it, and paying us interest for it. You will find a very amusing story, explaining your position in that case, at the 117th page of the *Manual of Political Economy*, published this year at Cambridge, for your early instruction, in an almost devotionally catechetical form, by Messrs. Macmillan.

Perhaps I had better quote it to you entire: it is taken by the author "from the French."

There was once in a village a poor carpenter, who worked hard from morning to night. One day James thought to himself, "With my hatchet, saw, and hammer, I can only make coarse furniture, and can only get the pay for such. If I had a plane, I should please my customers more, and they would pay me more. Yes, I am resolved, I will make myself a plane." At the end of ten days, James had in his possession an admirable plane, which he valued all the more for having made it himself. Whilst he was reckoning all the profits which he expected to derive from the use of it, he was interrupted by William, a carpenter in the neighbouring village. William, having admired the plane, was struck with the advantages which might be gained from it. He said to James:—

"You must do me a service; lend me the plane for a year." As might be expected, James cried out, "How can you think of such a thing, William? Well, if I do you this service, what will you do for me in return?"

W. Nothing. Don't you know that a loan ought to be gratuitous?

J. I know nothing of the sort; but I do know that if I were to lend you my plane for a year, it would be giving it to you. To tell you the truth, that was not what I made it for.

W. Very well, then; I ask you to do me a service; what service do you ask me in return?

J. First, then, in a year the plane will be done for. You must therefore give me another exactly like it.

W. That is perfectly just. I submit to these conditions. I think you must be satisfied with this, and can require nothing further.

J. I think otherwise. I made the plane for myself, and not for you. I expected to gain some advantage from it. I have made the plane for the purpose of improving my work and my condition; if you merely return it to me in a year, it is you who will gain the profit of it during the whole of that time. I am not bound to do you such a service without receiving anything in return. Therefore, if you wish for my plane, besides the restoration already bargained for, you must give me a new plank as a compensation for the advantages of which I shall be deprived.

These terms were agreed to, but the singular part of it is that at the end of the year, when the plane came into James's possession, he lent it again; recovered it, and lent it a third and fourth time. It has passed into the hands of his son, who still lends it. Let us examine this little story. The plane is the symbol of all capital, and the plank is the symbol of all interest.

If this be an abridgment, what a graceful piece of highly wrought literature the original story must be! I take the liberty of abridging it a little more.

James makes a plane, lends it to William on 1st January for a year. William gives him a plank for the loan of it, wears it out, and makes another for James, which he gives him on 31st December. On 1st January he again borrows the new one; and the arrangement is repeated continuously. The position of William therefore is, that he makes a plane every 31st of December; lends it to James till the next day, and pays James a plank annually for the privilege of lending it to him on that

evening. This, in future investigations of capital and interest, we will call, if you please, "the position of William."

You may not at the first glance see where the fallacy lies (the writer of this story evidently counts on your not seeing it at all).

If James did not lend the plane to William, he could only get his gain of a plank by working with it himself, and wearing it out himself. When he had worn it out at the end of the year, he would, therefore, have to make another for himself. William, working with it instead, gets the advantage instead, which he must, therefore, pay James his plank for; and return to James, what James would, if he had not lent his plane, then have had;—not a new plane—but the worn-out one. James must make a new one for himself, as he would have had to do if no William had existed; and if William likes to borrow it again for another plank—all is fair.

That is to say, clearing the story of its nonsense, that James makes a plane annually, and sells it to William for its proper price, which, in kind, is a new plank. But this arrangement has nothing whatever to do with principal, or with interest. There are, indeed, many very subtle conditions involved in any sale; one among which is the value of ideas; I will explain that value to you in the course of time; (the article is not one which modern political economists have any familiarity with dealings in); and I will tell you somewhat also of the real nature of in

terest; but if you will only get, for the present, a quite clear idea of "the Position of William," it is all I want of you.

I remain, your faithful friend,

JOHN RUSKIN

My next letter, I hope, on 1st February.

LETTER II.

DENMARK HILL,
1st February, 1871.

FRIENDS,

BEFORE going farther, you may like to know, and ought to know, what I mean by the title of these Letters; and why it is in Latin. I can only tell you in part, for the letters will be on many things, if I am able to carry out my plan in them; and that title means many things, and is in Latin, because I could not have given an English one that meant so many. We, indeed, were not till lately a loquacious people, nor a useless one; but the Romans did more, and said less, than any other nation that ever lived; and their language is the most heroic ever spoken by men.

Therefore I wish you to know, at least, some words of it, and to recognize what thoughts they stand for.

Some day, I hope, you may know—and that European workmen may know—many words of it; but even a few will be useful.

Do not smile at my saying so. Of Arithmetic, Geometry, and Chemistry, you can know but little, at the utmost; but that little, well learnt, serves you well. And a little Latin, well learnt, will serve you also, and in a higher way than any of these.

“Fors” is the best part of three good English words

Force, Fortitude, and Fortune. I wish you to know the meaning of those three words accurately.

“Force,” (in humanity), means power of doing good work. A fool, or a corpse, can do any quantity of mischief; but only a wise and strong man, or, with what true vital force there is in him, a weak one, can do good.

“Fortitude” means the power of bearing necessary pain, or trial of patience, whether by time, or temptation.

“Fortune” means the necessary fate of a man: the ordinance of his life which cannot be changed. To “make your Fortune” is to rule that appointed fate to the best ends of which it is capable.

Fors is a feminine word; and Clavigera is, therefore, the feminine of “Claviger.”

Clava means a club. Clavis, a key. Clavus, a nail, or a rudder.

Gero means “I carry.” It is the root of our word “gesture” (the way you carry yourself); and, in a curious bye-way, of “jest.”

Clavigera may mean, therefore, either Club-bearer, Key-bearer, or Nail-bearer.

Each of these three possible meanings of Clavigera corresponds to one of the three meanings of Fors.

Fors, the Club-bearer, means the strength of Hercules, or of Deed.

Fors, the Key-bearer, means the strength of Ulysses, or of Patience.

Fors, the Nail-bearer, means the strength of Lycurgus, or of Law.

I will tell you what you may usefully know of those three Greek persons in a little time. At present, note only of the three powers: 1. That the strength of Hercules is for deed, not misdeed; and that his club—the favourite weapon, also, of the Athenian hero Theseus, whose form is the best inheritance left to us by the greatest of Greek sculptors, (it is in the Elgin room of the British Museum, and I shall have much to tell you of him—especially how he helped Hercules in his utmost need, and how he invented mixed vegetable soup)—was for subduing monsters and cruel persons, and was of olive-wood. 2. That the Second Fors Clavigera is portress at a gate which she cannot open till you have waited long; and that her robe is of the color of ashes, or dry earth.* 3. That the Third Fors Clavigera, the power of Lycurgus, is Royal as well as Legal; and that the notablest crown yet existing in Europe of any that have been worn by Christian kings, was—people say—made of a Nail.

That is enough about my title, for this time; now to our work. I told you, and you will find it true, that, practically, all wages mean the food and lodging given you by the possessors of the land.

It begins to be asked on many sides how the possessors of the land became possessed of it, and why they should

* See Carey's translation of the ninth book of Dante's *Purgatory*, line 105.

still possess it, more than you or I: and Ricardo's "Theory" of Rent, though, for an economist, a very creditably ingenious work of fiction, will not much longer be imagined to explain the "Practice" of Rent.

The true answer, in this matter, as in all others, is the best. Some land has been bought; some, won by cultivation: but the greater part, in Europe, seized originally by force of hand.

You may think, in that case, you would be justified in trying to seize some yourselves, in the same way.

If you could, you, and your children, would only hold it by the same title as its present holders. If it is a bad one, you had better not so hold it; if a good one, you had better let the present holders alone.

And in any case, it is expedient that you should do so, for the present holders, whom we may generally call "Squires," (a title having three meanings, like Fors, and all good; namely, Rider, Shield-bearer, and Carver), are quite the best men you can now look to for leading: it is too true that they have much demoralized themselves lately by horse-racing, bird-shooting, and vermin-hunting; and most of all by living in London, instead of on their estates; but they are still without exception brave; nearly without exception, good-natured; honest, so far as they understand honesty, and much to be depended on, if once you and they understand each other.

Which you are far enough now from doing; and it is imminently needful that you should: so we will have an

accurate talk of them soon. The needfullest thing of all first is that you should know the functions of the persons whom you are being taught to think of as your protectors against the Squires ;—your “Employers,” namely ; or Capitalist Supporters of Labour.

“Employers.” It is a noble title. If, indeed, they have found you idle, and given you employment, wisely,—let us no more call them mere “Men” of Business, but rather “Angels” of Business : quite the best sort of Guardian Angel.

Yet are you sure it is necessary, absolutely, to look to superior natures for employment ? Is it inconceivable that you should employ—yourselves ? I ask the question, because these Seraphic beings, undertaking also to be Seraphic Teachers or Doctors, have theories about employment which may perhaps be true in their own celestial regions, but are inapplicable under worldly conditions.

To one of these principles, announced by themselves as highly important, I must call your attention closely, because it has of late been the cause of much embarrassment among persons in a sub-seraphic life. I take its statement verbatim, from the 25th page of the Cambridge catechism before quoted :

“This brings us to a most important proposition respecting capital, one which it is essential that the student should thoroughly understand.

“The proposition is this—A demand for commodities is not a demand for labour.

“The demand for labour depends upon the amount of capital ‘

the demand for commodities simply determines in what direction labour shall be employed.

“AN EXAMPLE.—The truth of these assertions can best be shown by examples. Let us suppose that a manufacturer of woollen cloth is in the habit of spending 50%. annually in lace. What does it matter, say some, whether he spends this 50%. in lace or whether he uses it to employ more labourers in his own business? Does not the 50%. spent in lace maintain the labourers who make the lace, just the same as it would maintain the labourers who make cloth, if the manufacturer used the money in extending his own business? If he ceased buying the lace, for the sake of employing more clothmakers, would there not be simply a transfer of the 50%. from the lacemakers to the clothmakers? In order to find the right answer to these questions let us imagine what would actually take place if the manufacturer ceased buying the lace, and employed the 50%. in paying the wages of an additional number of clothmakers. The lace manufacturer, in consequence of the diminished demand for lace, would diminish the production, and would withdraw from his business an amount of capital corresponding to the diminished demand. As there is no reason to suppose that the lacemaker would, on losing some of his custom, become more extravagant, or would cease to desire to derive income from the capital which the diminished demand has caused him to withdraw from his own business, it may be assumed that he would invest this capital in some other industry. This capital is not the same as that which his former customer, the woollen cloth manufacturer, is now paying his own labourers with; it is a second capital; and in the place of 50%. employed in maintaining labour, there is now 100%. so employed. There is no transfer from lacemakers to clothmakers. There is fresh employment for the clothmakers and a transfer from the lacemakers to some other labourers.”—(*Principles of Political Economy*, vol. 1, p. 102.)

This is very fine; and it is clear that we may carry forward the improvement in our commercial arrangements by recommending all the other customers of the lacemaker to treat him as the clothmaker has done. Whereupon he

of course leaves the lace business entirely, and uses all his capital in "some other industry." Having thus established the lacemaker with a complete "second capital," in the other industry, we will next proceed to develop a capital out of the clothmaker, by recommending all *his* customers to leave *him*. Whereupon, he will also invest his capital in "some other industry," and we have a Third capital, employed in the National benefit.

We will now proceed in the round of all possible businesses, developing a correspondent number of new capitals, till we come back to our friend the lacemaker again, and find him employed in whatever his new industry was. By now taking away again all his new customers, we begin the development of another order of Capitals in a higher Seraphic circle—and so develop at last an Infinite Capital!

It would be difficult to match this for simplicity; it is more comic even than the fable of James and William, though you may find it less easy to detect the fallacy here; but the obscurity is not because the error is less gross, but because it is threefold. Fallacy 1st is the assumption that a clothmaker may employ any number of men, whether he has customers or not; while a lacemaker must dismiss his men if he has not customers. Fallacy 2nd. That when a lacemaker can no longer find customers for lace, he can always find customers for something else. Fallacy 3rd (the essential one). That the funds provided by these new

customers, produced seraphically from the clouds, are a "second capital." Those customers, if they exist now, existed before the lacemaker adopted his new business; and were the employers of the people in that business. If the lacemaker gets them, he merely diverts their fifty pounds from the tradesmen they were before employing, to himself; and that is Mr. Mill's "second capital."

Underlying these three fallacies, however, there is, in the mind of "the greatest thinker of England," some consciousness of a partial truth, which he has never yet been able to define for himself—still less to explain to others. The real root of them is his conviction that it is beneficial and profitable to make broadcloth; and unbeneficial and unprofitable to make lace;* so that the trade of clothmaking should be infinitely extended, and that of lacemaking infinitely repressed. Which is, indeed, partially true. Making cloth, if it be well made, is a good industry; and if you had sense enough to read your Walter Scott thoroughly, I should invite you to join me in sincere hope that Glasgow might in that industry long flourish; and the chief hostelry at Aberfoil be at the sign of the "Nicol Jarvie." Also, of lacemakers, it is often true that they had better be doing something else.

* I assume the Cambridge quotation to be correct: in my old edition, (1848), the distinction is between "weavers and lace-makers" and "journeyman bricklayers;" and making velvet is considered to be the production of a "commodity," but building a house only doing a "service."

I admit it, with no good will, for I know a most kind lady, a clergyman's wife, who devotes her life to the benefit of her country by employing lacemakers; and all her friends make presents of collars and cuffs to each other, for the sake of charity; and as, if they did not, the poor girl-lacemakers would probably indeed be "diverted" into some other less diverting industry, in due assertion of the rights of women, (cartridge-filling, or percussion-cap making, most likely) I even go the length, sometimes, of furnishing my friend with a pattern, and never say a word to disturb her young customers in their conviction that it is an act of Christian charity to be married in more than ordinarily expensive veils.

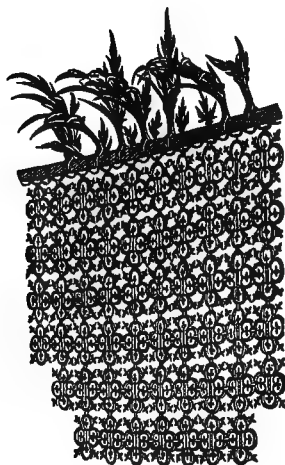
But there *is* one kind of lace for which I should be glad that the demand ceased. Iron lace. If we must even doubt whether ornamental thread-work may be, wisely, made on cushions in the sunshine, by dexterous fingers for fair shoulders,—how are we to think of Ornamental Iron-work, made with deadly sweat of men, and steady waste, all summer through, of the coals that Earth gave us for winter fuel? What shall we say of labour spent on lace such as that?

Nay, says the Cambridge Catechism, "the demand for commodities is not a demand for labour."

Doubtless, in the economist's new earth, cast iron will be had for asking; the hapless and brave Parisians find it even rain occasionally out of the new economical Heavens, *without* asking. Gold will also one day, perhaps, be be-

gotten of gold, until the supply of that, as well as of iron, may be, at least, equal to the demand. But, in this world, it is not so yet. Neither thread-lace, gold-lace, iron-lace, nor stone-lace, whether they be commodities or incommunities, can be had for nothing. How much, think you, did the gilded flourishes cost round the gas-lamps on Westminster Bridge? or the stone-lace of the pinnacles of the temple of Parliament at the end of it, (incommodious enough, as I hear;) or the point-lace of the park-railings which you so improperly pulled down, when you wanted to be Parliamentary yourselves; (much good you would have got of that!) or the "openwork" of iron railings generally—the special glories of English design? Will you count the cost, in labour and coals, of the blank bars ranged along all the melancholy miles of our suburban streets, saying with their rusty tongues, as plainly as iron tongues can speak, "Thieves outside, and nothing to steal within." A beautiful wealth they are! and a productive capital! "Well but," you answer, "the making them was work for us." Of course it was; is not that the very thing I am telling you! Work it was; and too much. But will you be good enough to make up your minds, once for all, whether it is really work that you want, or rest? I thought you rather objected to your quantity of work;—that you were all for having eight hours of it instead of ten? You may have twelve instead of ten easily. Sixteen, if you like! if it is only occupation you want, why do you cast the iron? Forge it in the

fresh air, on a workman's anvil; make iron-lace like this of Verona,—



every link of it swinging loose like a knight's chain mail: then you may have some joy of it afterwards, and pride; and say you knew the cunning of a man's right hand. But I think it is pay that you want, not work; and it is very true that pretty ironwork like that does not pay; but it *is* pretty, and it might even be entertaining, if you made those leaves at the top of it (which are, as far as I can see, only artichoke, and not very well done) in the likeness of all the beautiful leaves you could find, till you knew them all by heart. "Wasted time and hammer-strokes," say you? "A wise people like the English will have nothing but spikes; and besides, the spikes are

highly needful, so many of the wise people being thieves." Yes, that is so; and, therefore, in calculating the annual cost of keeping your thieves, you must always reckon, not only the cost of the spikes that keep them in, but of the spikes that keep them out. But how if, instead of flat rough spikes, you put triangular polished ones, commonly called bayonets; and instead of the perpendicular bars put perpendicular men? What is the cost to you then, of your railing, of which you must feed the idle bars daily? Costly enough, if it stays quiet. But how, if it begin to march and countermarch? and apply its spikes horizontally?

And now note this that follows; it is of vital importance to you.

There are, practically, two absolutely opposite kinds of labour going on among men, for ever.*

The first, labour supported by Capital, producing nothing.

The second, labour unsupported by Capital, producing all things.

Take two simple and precise instances on a small scale.

A little while since I was paying a visit in Ireland, and chanced to hear an account of the pleasures of a picnic

* I do not mean that there are no other kinds, nor that well-paid labour must necessarily be unproductive. I hope to see much done, some day, for just pay, and wholly productive. But these, named in the text, are the two opposite extremes; and, in actual life hitherto, the largest means have been usually spent in mischief, and the most useful work done for the worst pay.

party, who had gone to see a waterfall. There was of course ample lunch, feasting on the grass, and basketsfull of fragments taken up afterwards.

Then the company, feeling themselves dull, gave the fragments that remained to the attendant ragged boys, on condition that they should "pull each other's hair."

Here, you see, is, in the most accurate sense, employment of food, or capital, in the support of entirely unproductive labour.

Next, for the second kind. I live at the top of a short but rather steep hill; at the bottom of which, every day, all the year round, but especially in frost, coal-waggons get stranded, being economically provided with the smallest number of horses that can get them along on level ground.

The other day, when the road, frozen after thaw, was at the worst, my assistant, the engraver of that bit of iron-work on the 29th page, was coming up here, and found three coal-waggons at a lock, helpless; the drivers, as usual, explaining Political Economy to the horses, by beating them over the heads.

There were half-a-dozen fellows besides, out of work, or not caring to be in it—standing by, looking on. My engraver put his shoulder to a wheel (at least his hand to a spoke), and called on the idlers to do as much. They didn't seem to have thought of such a thing, but were ready enough when called on. "And we went up screaming," said Mr. Burgess.

Do you suppose that was one whit less proper human work than going up a hill against a battery, merely because, in that case, half of the men would have gone down, screaming, instead of up; and those who got up would have done no good at the top?

But observe the two opposite kinds of labour. The first, lavishly supported by Capital, and producing Nothing. The second, unsupported by any Capital whatsoever,—not having so much as a stick for a tool—but, called by mere goodwill, out of the vast void of the world's Idleness, and producing the definitely profitable result of moving a weight of fuel some distance towards the place where it was wanted, and sparing the strength of over loaded creatures.

Observe further. The labour producing no useful result was demoralizing. All such labour is.

The labour producing useful result was educational in its influence on the temper. All such labour is.

And the first condition of education, the thing you are all crying out for, is being put to wholesome and useful work. And it is nearly the last condition of it, too; you need very little more; but, as things go, there will yet be difficulty in getting that. As things have hitherto gone, the difficulty has been to avoid getting the reverse of that.

For, during the last eight hundred years, the upper classes of Europe have been one large Picnic Party. Most of them have been religious also; and in sitting down, by companies, upon the green grass, in parks, gardens, and

the like, have considered themselves commanded into that position by Divine authority, and fed with bread from Heaven: of which they duly considered it proper to bestow the fragments in support, and the tithes in tuition, of the poor.

But, without even such small cost, they might have taught the poor many beneficial things. In some places, they *have* taught them manners, which is already much. They might have cheaply taught them merriment also:—dancing and singing, for instance. The young English ladies who sit nightly to be instructed, themselves, at some cost, in melodies illustrative of the consumption of La Traviata, and the damnation of Don Juan, might have taught every girl peasant in England to join in costless choirs of innocent song. Here and there, perhaps, a gentleman might have been found able to teach his peasantry some science and art. Science and fine art don't pay; but they cost little. Tithes—not of the income of the country, but of the income, say, of its brewers—nay, probably the sum devoted annually by England to provide drugs for the adulteration of its own beer,—would have founded lovely little museums, and perfect libraries, in every village. And if here and there an English churchman had been found (such as Dean Stanley) willing to explain to peasants the sculpture of his and their own cathedral, and to read its black letter inscriptions for them; and, on warm Sundays, when they were too sleepy to attend to anything more proper—to tell them a story about some of

the people who had built it, or lay buried in it—we perhaps might have been quite as religious as we are, and yet need not now have been offering prizes for competition in art schools, nor lecturing with tender sentiment on the inimitableness of the works of Fra Angelico.

These things the great Picnic Party might have taught without cost, and with amusement to themselves. One thing, at least, they were bound to teach, whether it amused them or not;—how, day by day, the daily bread they expected their village children to pray to God for, might be earned in accordance with the laws of God. *This* they might have taught, not only without cost, but with great gain. One thing only they *Have* taught, and at considerable cost.

They have spent four hundred millions * of pounds here in England within the last twenty years!—how much in France and Germany, I will take some pains to ascertain for you,—and with this initial outlay of capital, have taught the peasants of Europe—to pull each other's hair.

With *this* result, 17th January, 1871, at and around the chief palace of their own pleasures, and the chief city of their delights:

“Each demolished house has its own legend of sorrow, of pain, and horror; each vacant doorway speaks to the eye, and almost to

* £992,740,328, in seventeen years, say the working men of Burnley, in their address just issued—an excellent address in its way, and full of very fair arithmetic—if its facts are all right; only I don't see, myself, how “from fifteen to twenty-five millions per annum,” make nine hundred and ninety-two millions in seventeen years.

the ear, of hasty flight, as armies or fire came—of weeping women and trembling children running away in awful fear, abandoning the home that saw their birth, the old house they loved—of startled men seizing quickly under each arm their most valued goods, and rushing, heavily laden, after their wives and babes, leaving to hostile hands the task of burning all the rest. When evening falls, the wretched outcasts, worn with fatigue and tears, reach Versailles, St. Germain, or some other place outside the range of fire, and there they beg for bread and shelter, homeless, foodless, broken with despair. And this, remember, has been the fate of something like a hundred thousand people during the last four months. Versailles alone has about fifteen thousand such fugitives to keep alive, all ruined, all hopeless, all vaguely asking the grim future what still worse fate it may have in store for them.”—*Daily Telegraph*, Jan. 17th, 1871.

That is the result round their pleasant city, and *this* within their industrious and practical one: let us keep for the reference of future ages, a picture of domestic life, out of the streets of London in her commercial prosperity, founded on the eternal laws of Supply and Demand, as applied by the modern Capitalist:

“A father in the last stage of consumption—two daughters nearly marriageable with hardly sufficient rotting clothing to ‘cover their shame.’ The rags that hang around their attenuated frames flutter in strips against their naked legs. They have no stool or chair upon which they can sit. Their father occupies the only stool in the room. They have no employment by which they can earn even a pittance. They are at home starving on a half-chance meal a day, and hiding their raggedness from the world. The walls are bare, there is one bed in the room, and a bundle of dirty rags are upon it. The dying father will shortly follow the dead mother, and when the parish coffin encloses his wasted form, and a pauper’s grave closes above him, what shall be his daughters’ lot? This is but a type of many other homes in the district: dirt, misery, and disease alone flourish in that wretched neighbourhood. ‘Fever and small-pox rage,’ as the inhab-

itants say, 'next door, and next door, and over the way, and next door to that, and further down.' The living, dying, and dead are all huddled together. The houses have no ventilation, the back yards are receptacles for all sorts of filth and rubbish, the old barrels or vessels that contain the supply of water are thickly coated on the sides with slime, and there is an undisturbed deposit of mud at the bottom. There is no mortuary house—the dead lie in the dog-holes where they breathed their last, and add to the contagion which spreads through the neighbourhood."—*Pall Mall Gazette*, January 7th, 1871, quoting the *Builder*.

As I was revising this sheet,—on the evening of the 20th of last month,—two slips of paper were brought to me. One contained, in consecutive paragraphs, an extract from the speech of one of the best and kindest of our public men, to the "Liberal Association" at Portsmouth; and an account of the performances of the 35-ton gun called the "Woolwich infant," which is fed with 700 pound shot, and 130 pounds of gunpowder at one mouthful; not at all like the Wapping infants, starving on a half-chance meal a day. "The gun was fired with the most satisfactory result," nobody being hurt, and nothing damaged but the platform, while the shot passed through the screens in front at the rate of 1,303 feet per second: and it seems, also, that the Woolwich infant has not seen the light too soon. For Mr. Cowper-Temple, in the preceding paragraph, informs the Liberals of Portsmouth, that in consequence of our amiable neutrality, "we must contemplate the contingency of a combined fleet coming from the ports of Prussia, Russia, and America, and making an attack on England."

Contemplating myself these relations of Russia, Prussia, Woolwich, and Wapping, it seems to my uncommercial mind merely like another case of iron railings—thieves outside, and nothing to steal within. But the second slip of paper announced approaching help in a peaceful direction. It was the prospectus of the Boardmen's and General Advertising Co-operative Society, which invites, from the "generosity of the public, a necessary small preliminary sum," and, "in addition to the above, a small sum of money by way of capital," to set the members of the society up in the profitable business of walking about London between two boards. Here *is* at last found for us, then, it appears, a line of life! At the West End, lounging about the streets, with a well-made back to one's coat, and front to one's shirt, is usually thought of as not much in the way of business; but, doubtless, to lounge at the East End about the streets, with one Lie pinned to the front of you, and another to the back of you, will pay, in time, only with proper preliminary expenditure of capital. My friends, I repeat my question: Do you not think you could contrive some little method of employing—yourselves? for truly I think the Seraphic Doctors are nearly at their wits' end (if ever their wits had a beginning). Tradesmen are beginning to find it difficult to live by lies of their own; and workmen will not find it much easier to live, by walking about, flattened between other people's.

Think over it. On the first of March, I hope to ask you to read a little history with me; perhaps, also, because the

world's time, seen truly, is but one long and fitful April, in which every day is All Fools' day,—we may continue our studies in that month; but on the first of May, you shall consider with me what you can do, or let me, if still living, tell you what I know you can do—those of you, at least, who will promise—(with the help of the three strong Fates), these three things:

1. To do your own work well, whether it be for life or death.

2. To help other people at theirs, when you can, and seek to avenge no injury.

3. To be sure you can obey good laws before you seek to alter bad ones.

Believe me,

Your faithful friend,

JOHN RUSKIN

LETTER III.

DENMARK HILL,

1st March, 1871.

MY FRIENDS,

WE are to read—with your leave—some history to-day; the leave, however, will perhaps not willingly be given, for you may think that of late you have read enough history, or too much, in *Gazettes* of morning and evening. No; you have read, and can read, no history in these. Reports of daily events, yes;—and if any journal would limit itself to statements of well-sifted fact, making itself not a “news”paper, but an “olds”paper, and giving its statements tested and true, like old wine, as soon as things could be known accurately; choosing also, of the many things that might be known, those which it was most vital to know, and summing them in few words of pure English,—I cannot say whether it would ever pay well to sell it; but I am sure it would pay well to read it, and to read no other.

But even so, to know only what was happening day by day, would not be to read history. What happens now is but the momentary scene of a great play, of which you can understand nothing without some knowledge of the former action. And of that, so great a play is it, you can at best understand little; yet of history, as of science, a

little, well known, will serve you much, and a little, ill known, will do you fatally the contrary of service.

For instance, all your journals will be full of talk, for months to come, about whose fault the war was ; and you yourselves, as you begin to feel its deadly recoil on your own interests, or as you comprehend better the misery it has brought on others, will be looking about more and more restlessly for some one to accuse of it. That is because you don't know the law of Fate, nor the course of history. It is the law of Fate that we shall live, in part, by our own efforts, but in the greater part, by the help of others ; and that we shall also die, in part, for our own faults ; but in the greater part, for the faults of others. Do you suppose (to take the thing on the small scale in which you can test it) that those seven children torn into pieces out of their sleep, in the last night of the siege of Paris,* had sinned above all the children in Paris, or above yours ? or that their parents had sinned more than you ? Do you think the thousands of soldiers, German and French, who have died in agony, and of women who have died of grief, had sinned above all other soldiers, or mothers, or girls, there and here ?

It was not their fault, but their Fate. The thing appointed to them by the Third Fors. But you think it was at least the Emperor Napoleon's fault, if not theirs ? Or Count Bismarck's ? No ; not at all. The Emperor Napoleon had no more to do with it than a cork on the top of a

* *Daily Telegraph*, 30th January, 1871.

wave has with the toss of the sea. Count Bismarck had very little to do with it. When the Count sent for my waiter, last July, in the village of Lauterbrunnen, among the Alps,—that the waiter then and there packed his knapsack and departed, to be shot, if need were, leaving my dinner unserved (as has been the case with many other people's dinners since)—depended on things much anterior to Count Bismarck. The two men who had most to answer for in the mischief of the matter were St. Louis and his brother, who lived in the middle of the thirteenth century. One, among the very best of men; and the other, of all that I ever read of, the worst. The good man, living in mistaken effort, and dying miserably, to the ruin of his country; the bad man living in triumphant good fortune, and dying peaceably, to the ruin of many countries. Such were their Fates, and ours. I am not going to tell you of them, nor anything about the French war to-day; and you have been told, long ago, (only you would not listen, nor believe,) the root of the modern German power—in that rough father of Frederick, who “yearly made his country richer, and this not in money alone (which is of very uncertain value, and sometimes has no value at all, and even less), but in frugality, diligence, punctuality, veracity,—the grand fountains from which money, and all real *values* and valours, spring for men. As a Nation's *Husband*, he seeks his fellow among Kings, ancient and modern. Happy the nation which gets such a Husband, once in the half thousand years. The Nation, as foolish wives and

Nations do, repines and grudges a good deal, its weak whims and will being thwarted very often; but it advances steadily, with consciousness or not, in the way of well-doing; and, after long times, the harvest of this diligent sowing becomes manifest to the Nation, and to all Nations." *

No such harvest is sowing for you,—Freemen and Independent Electors of Parliamentary representatives, as you think yourselves.

Freemen, indeed! You are slaves, not to masters of any strength or honour; but to the idlest talkers at that floral end of Westminster bridge. Nay, to countless meaner masters than they. For though, indeed, as early as the year 1102, it was decreed in a council at St. Peter's, Westminster, "that no man for the future should presume to carry on the wicked trade of selling men in the markets, like brute beasts, which hitherto hath been the common custom of England," the no less wicked trade of *under-selling* men in markets has lasted to this day; producing conditions of slavery differing from the ancient ones only in being starved instead of full-fed: and besides this, a state of slavery unheard of among the nations till now, has arisen with us. In all former slaveries, Egyptian, Algerine, Saxon, and American, the slave's complaint has been of compulsory *work*. But the modern Politico-Economic slave is a new and far more injured species, condemned to Compulsory *Idleness*, for fear he should spoil

* Carlyle's *Frederick*, Book IV., chap. iii.

other people's trade; the beautifully logical condition of the national Theory of Economy in this matter being that, if you are a shoemaker, it is a law of Heaven that you must sell your goods under their price, in order to destroy the trade of other shoemakers; but if you are not a shoemaker, and are going shoeless and lame, it is a law of Heaven that you must not cut yourself a bit of cowhide, to put between your foot and the stones, because that would interfere with the total trade of shoemaking.

Which theory, of all the wonderful—!

* * * * *

We will wait till April to consider of it; meantime, here is a note I have received from Mr. Alsager A. Hill, who having been unfortunately active in organizing that new effort in the advertising business, designed, as it seems, on this loveliest principle of doing nothing that will be perilously productive—was hurt by my manner of mention of it in the last number of *Fors*. I offered accordingly to print any form of remonstrance he would furnish me with, if laconic enough; and he writes to me, “The intention of the Boardmen’s Society is not, as the writer of *Fors Clavigera* suggests, to ‘find a line of life’ for able-bodied labourers, but simply, by means of co-operation, to give them the fullest benefit of their labour whilst they continue a very humble but still remunerative calling. See Rule 12. The capital asked for to start the organization is essential in all industrial partnerships, and in so poor a class of labour as that of street board-carrying could not

be supplied by the men themselves. With respect to the 'lies' alleged to be carried in front and behind, it is rather hard measure to say that mere announcements of public meetings or places of entertainments (of which street notices chiefly consist) are necessarily falsehoods."

To which, I have only to reply that I never said the newly-found line of life was meant for able-bodied persons. The distinction between able and unable-bodied men is entirely indefinite. There are all degrees of ability for all things; and a man who can do anything, however little, should be made to do that little usefully. If you can carry about a board with a bill on it, you can carry, not about, but where it is wanted, a board *without* a bill on it; which is a much more useful exercise of your inability. Respecting the general probity, and historical or descriptive accuracy, of advertisements, and their function in modern economy, I will inquire in another place. You see I use none for this book, and shall in future use none for any of my books; having grave objection even to the very small minority of advertisements which are approximately true. I am correcting this sheet in the "Crown and Thistle" inn at Abingdon, and under my window is a shrill-voiced person, slowly progressive, crying "Soles, three pair for a shillin'." In a market regulated by reason and order, instead of demand and supply, the soles would neither have been kept long enough to render such advertisement of them necessary, nor permitted, after their inexpedient preservation, to be advertised.

Of all attainable liberties, then, be sure first to strive for leave to be useful. Independence you had better cease to talk of, for you are dependent not only on every act of people whom you never heard of, who are living round you, but on every past act of what has been dust for a thousand years. So also, does the course of a thousand years to come, depend upon the little perishing strength that is in you.

Little enough, and perishing, often without reward, however well spent. Understand that. Virtue does not consist in doing what will be presently paid, or even paid at all, to you, the virtuous person. It may so chance; or may not. It will be paid, some day; but the vital condition of it, as virtue, is that it shall be content in its own deed, and desirous rather that the pay of it, if any, should be for others; just as it is also the vital condition of vice to be content in its own deed, and desirous that the pay thereof, if any, should be to others.

You have probably heard of St. Louis before now: and perhaps also that he built the Sainte Chapelle of Paris, of which you may have seen that I wrote the other day to the *Telegraph*, as being the most precious piece of Gothic in Northern Europe; but you are not likely to have known that the spire of it was Tenterden steeple over again, and the cause of fatal sands many, quick, and slow, and above all, of the running of these in the last hour-glass of France; for that spire, and others like it, subordinate, have acted ever since as lightning-rods, in a reverse manner; carry

ing, not the fire of heaven innocently to earth, but electric fire of earth innocently to heaven, leaving us all, down here, cold. The best virtue and heart-fire of France (not to say of England, who building her towers for the most part with four pinnacles instead of one, in a somewhat quadrumanous type, finds them less apt as conductors), have spent themselves for these past six centuries in running up those steeples and off them, nobody knows where, leaving a "holy Republic" as residue at the bottom; helpless, clay-cold, and croaking, a habitation of frogs, which poor Garibaldi fights for, vainly raging against the ghost of St. Louis.

It is of English ghosts, however, that I would fain tell you somewhat to-day; of them, and of the land they haunt, and know still for theirs. For hear this to begin with:—

"While a map of France or Germany in the eleventh century is useless for modern purposes, and looks like the picture of another region, a map of England proper in the reign of Victoria hardly differs at all from a map of England proper in the reign of William" (the Conqueror). So says, very truly, Mr. Freeman in his *History of the Conquest*. Are there any of you who care for this *old* England, of which the map has remained unchanged for so long? I believe you would care more for her, and less for yourselves, except as her faithful children, if you knew a little more about her; and*especially more of what she has been. The difficulty, indeed, at any time,

is in finding out what she has been ; for that which people usually call her history is not hers at all ; but that of her Kings, or the tax-gatherers employed by them, which is as if people were to call Mr. Gladstone's history, or Mr. Lowe's, yours and mine.

But the history even of her Kings is worth reading. You remember, I said, that sometimes in church it might keep you awake to be told a little of it. For a simple instance, you have heard probably of Absalom's rebellion against his father, and of David's agony at his death, until from very weariness you have ceased to feel the power of the story. You would not feel it less vividly if you knew that a far more fearful sorrow, of the like kind, had happened to one of your own Kings, perhaps the best we have had, take him for all in all. Not one only, but three of his sons, rebelled against *him*, and were urged into rebellion by their mother. The Prince, who should have been King after him, was pardoned, not once, but many times—pardoned wholly, with rejoicing over him as over the dead alive, and set at his father's right hand in the kingdom ; but all in vain. Hard and treacherous to the heart's core, nothing wins him, nothing warns, nothing binds. He flies to France, and wars at last alike against father and brother, till, falling sick through mingled guilt, and shame, and rage, he repents idly as the fever-fire withers him. His father sends him the signet ring from his finger in token of one more forgiveness. The Prince lies down on a heap of ashes with a halter round his neck,

and so dies. When his father heard it he fainted away three times, and then broke out into bitterest crying and tears. This, you would have thought enough for the Third dark Fate to have appointed for a man's sorrows. It was little to that which was to come. His second son, who was now his Prince of England, conspired against him, and pursued his father from city to city, in Norman France. At last, even his youngest son, best beloved of all, abandoned him, and went over to his enemies.

This was enough. Between him and his children Heaven commanded its own peace. He sickened and died of grief on the 6th of July, 1189.

The son who had killed him, "repented" now; but there could be no signet ring sent to him. Perhaps the dead do not forgive. Men say, as he stood by his father's corpse, that the blood burst from its nostrils. One child only had been faithful to him, but he was the son of a girl whom he had loved much, and as he should not; his Queen, therefore, being a much older person, and strict upon proprieties, poisoned her; nevertheless poor Rosamond's son never failed him; won a battle for him in England, which, in all human probability, saved his kingdom; and was made a bishop, and turned out a bishop of the best.

You know already a little about the Prince who stood unforgiven (as it seemed) by his father's body. He, also, had to forgive, in his time; but only a stranger's arrow shot—not those reversed "arrows in the hand of the giant,"

by which his father died. Men called him "Lion-heart," not untruly; and the English, as a people, have prided themselves somewhat ever since on having, every man of them, the heart of a lion; without inquiring particularly either what sort of heart a lion has, or whether to have the heart of a lamb might not sometimes be more to the purpose. But it so happens that the name was very justly given to this prince; and I want you to study his character somewhat, with me, because in all our history there is no truer representative of one great species of the British squire, under all the three significances of the name; for this Richard of ours was beyond most of his fellows, a Rider and a Shieldbearer; and beyond all men of his day, a Carver; and in disposition and *unreasonable* exercise of intellectual power, typically a Squire altogether.

Note of him first, then, that he verily desired the good of his people (provided it could be contrived without any check of his own humour), and that he saw his way to it a great deal clearer than any of your squires do now. Here are some of his laws for you:—

"Having set forth the great inconveniences arising from the diversity of weights and measures in different parts of the kingdom, he, by a law, commanded all measures of corn, and other dry goods, as also of liquors, to be exactly the same in all his dominions; and that the rim of each of these measures should be a circle of iron. By another law, he commanded all cloth to be woven two yards in breadth within the lists, and of equal goodness

in all parts ; and that all cloth which did not answer this description should be seized and burnt. He enacted, further, that all the coin of the kingdom should be exactly of the same weight and fineness ;—that no Christian should take any interest for money lent ; and, to prevent the extortions of the Jews, he commanded that all compacts between Christians and Jews should be made in the presence of witnesses, and the conditions of them put in writing.” So, you see, in Cœur-de-Lion’s day, it was not esteemed of absolute necessity to put agreements between *Christians* in writing ! Which if it were not now, you know we might save a great deal of money, and discharge some of our workmen round Temple Bar, as well as from Woolwich Dockyards. Note also that bit about interest of money also for future reference. In the next place observe that this King had great objection to thieves—at least to any person whom he clearly comprehended to be a thief. He was the inventor of a mode of treatment which I believe the Americans—among whom it has not fallen altogether into disuse—do not gratefully enough recognize as a Monarchical institution. By the last of the laws for the government of his fleet in his expedition to Palestine, it is decreed,—“That whoever is convicted of theft shall have his head shaved, melted pitch poured upon it, and the feathers from a pillow shaken over it, that he may be known ; and shall be put on shore on the first land which the ship touches.” And not only so ; he even objected to any theft by misre-

presentation or deception,—for being evidently particularly interested, like Mr. Mill, in that cloth manufacture, and having made the above law about the breadth of the web, which has caused it to be spoken of ever since as “Broad Cloth,” and besides, for better preservation of its breadth, enacted that the Ell shall be of the same length all over the kingdom, and that it shall be made of iron—(so that Mr. Tennyson’s provision for National defences—that every shop-boy should strike with his cheating yard-wand home, would be mended much by the substitution of King Richard’s *honest* ell-wand, and for once with advisable encouragement to the iron trade)—King Richard finally declares—“That it shall be of the same goodness in the middle as at the sides, and that no merchant in any part of the kingdom of England shall stretch before his shop or booth a red or black cloth, or any other thing by which the sight of buyers is frequently deceived in the choice of good cloth.”

These being Richard’s rough and unreasonable, chancing nevertheless, being wholly honest, to be wholly right, notions of business, the next point you are to note in him is his unreasonable good humour; an eminent character of English Squires; a very loveable one; and available to himself and others in many ways, but not altogether so exemplary as many think it. If you are unscrupulously resolved, whenever you can get your own way, to take it; if you are in a position of life wherein you can get a good deal of it, and if you have pugnacity enough to enjoy

fighting with anybody who will not give it you, there is little reason why you should ever be out of humour, unless indeed your way is a broad one, wherein you are like to be opposed in force. Richard's way was a very narrow one. To be first in battle, (generally obtaining that main piece of his will without question; once only worsted, by a French knight, and then, not at all good-humouredly), to be first in recognized command—therefore contending with his father, who was both in wisdom and acknowledged place superior; but scarcely contending at all with his brother John, who was as definitely and deeply beneath him; good-humoured unreasonably, while he was killing his father, the best of kings, and letting his brother rule unresisted, who was among the worst; and only proposing for his object in life to enjoy himself everywhere in a chivalrous, poetical, and pleasantly animal manner, as a strong man always may. What should he have been out of humour for? That he brightly and bravely lived through his captivity is much indeed to his honour; but it was his point of honour to be bright and brave; not at all to take care of his kingdom. A king who cared for that, would have got thinner and sadder in prison.

And it remains true of the English squire to this day, that, for the most part, he thinks that his kingdom is given him that he may be bright and brave; and not at all that the sunshine or valour in him is meant to be of use to his kingdom.

But the next point you have to note in Richard is in

deed a very noble quality, and true English; he always does as much of his work as he can with his own hands. He was not in any wise a king who would sit by a wind-mill to watch his son and his men at work, though brave kings have done so. As much as might be, of whatever had to be done, he would steadfastly do from his own shoulder; his main tool being an old Greek one, and the working God Vulcan's—the clearing axe. When that was no longer needful, and nothing would serve but spade and trowel, still the king was foremost; and after the weary retreat to Ascalon, when he found the place “so completely ruined and deserted, that it afforded neither food, lodging, nor protection,” nor any other sort of capital,—forthwith, 20th January, 1192—his army and he set to work to repair it; a three months' business, of incessant toil, “from which the king himself was not exempted, but wrought with greater ardour than any common labourer.”

The next point of his character is very English also, but less honourably so. I said but now that he had a great objection to anybody whom he clearly comprehended to be a thief. But he had great difficulty in reaching anything like an abstract definition of thieving, such as would include every method of it, and every culprit, which is an incapacity very common to many of us to this day. For instance, he carried off a great deal of treasure which belonged to his father, from Chinon (the royal treasury-town in France), and fortified his own castles in Poitou

with it; and when he wanted money to go crusading with, sold the royal castles, manors, woods, and forests, and even the superiority of the Crown of England over the kingdom of Scotland, which his father had wrought hard for, for about a hundred thousand pounds. Nay, the highest honours and most important offices become venal under him; and from a Princess's dowry to a Saracen caravan, nothing comes much amiss: not but that he gives generously also; whole ships at a time when he is in the humour; but his main practice is getting and spending, never saving; which covetousness is at last the death of him. For hearing that a considerable treasure of ancient coins and medals has been found in the lands of Vidomar, Viscount of Limoges, King Richard sends forthwith to claim this waif for himself. The Viscount offers him part only, presumably having an antiquarian turn of mind. Whereupon Richard loses his temper, and marches forthwith with some Brabant men, mercenaries, to besiege the Viscount in his castle of Chalus; proposing, first, to possess himself of the antique and otherwise interesting coin in the castle, and then, on his general principle of objection to thieves, to hang the garrison. The garrison, on this, offer to give up the antiquities if they may march off themselves; but Richard declares that nothing will serve but they must all be hanged. Whereon the siege proceeding by rule, and Richard looking, as usual, into matters with his own eyes, and going too near the walls, an arrow well meant, though half spent, pierces the strong

white shoulder; the shield-bearing one, carelessly forward above instead of under shield; or perhaps, rather, when he was afoot, shieldless, engineering. He finishes his work, however, though the scratch teases him; plans his assault, carries his castle, and duly hangs his garrison, all but the archer, whom in his royal unreasoning way he thinks better of, for the well-spent arrow. But he pulls it out impatiently, and the head of it stays in the fair flesh; a little surgery follows; not so skilful as the archery of those days, and the lion heart is appeased—

Sixth April, 1199.

We will pursue our historical studies, if you please, in that month of the present year. But I wish, in the meantime, you would observe, and meditate on, the quite Anglican character of Richard, to his death.

It might have been remarked to him, on his projecting the expedition to Chalus, that there were not a few Roman coins, and other antiquities, to be found in his own kingdom of England, without fighting for them, by mere spade-labour and other innocuous means;—that even the brightest new money was obtainable from his loyal people in almost any quantity for civil asking, and that the same loyal people, encouraged and protected, and above all, kept clean-handed, in the arts, by their king, might produce treasures more covetable than any antiquities.

“No;” Richard would have answered,—“that is all hypothetical and visionary; here is a pot of coin presently

to be had—no doubt about it—inside the walls here:—
let me once get hold of that, and then,”—

* * * * *

That is what we English call being “Practical.”

Believe me,

Faithfully yours,

JOHN RUSKIN.

LETTER IV.

DENMARK HILL,

1st April, 1871.

MY FRIENDS,

It cannot but be pleasing to us to reflect, this day, that if we are often foolish enough to talk English without understanding it, we are often wise enough to talk Latin without knowing it. For this month retains its pretty Roman name, and means the month of Opening ; of the light in the days, and the life in the leaves, and of the voices of birds, and of the hearts of men.

And being the month of Manifestation, it is pre-eminently the month of Fools ;—for under the beatific influences of moral sunshine, or Education, the Fools always come out first.

But what is less pleasing to reflect upon, this spring morning, is, that there are some kinds of education which may be described, not as moral sunshine, but as moral moonshine ; and that, under these, Fools come out both First—and Last.

We have, it seems, now set our opening hearts much on this one point, that we will have education for all men and women now, and for all boys and girls that are to be. Nothing, indeed, can be more desirable, if only we determine also what kind of education we are to have. It is taken for granted that any education must be good ;—that the more

of it we get, the better; that bad education only means little education; and that the worst thing we have to fear is getting none. Alas, that is not at all so. Getting no education is by no means the worst thing that can happen to us. One of the pleasantest friends I ever had in my life was a Savoyard guide, who could only read with difficulty, and write, scarcely intelligibly, and by great effort. He knew no language but his own—no science, except as much practical agriculture as served him to till his fields. But he was, without exception, one of the happiest persons, and, on the whole, one of the best, I have ever known; and after lunch, when he had had his half bottle of Savoy wine, he would generally, as we walked up some quiet valley in the afternoon light, give me a little lecture on philosophy; and after I had fatigued and provoked him with less cheerful views of the world than his own, he would fall back to my servant behind me, and console himself with a shrug of the shoulders, and a whispered “*Le pauvre enfant, il ne sait pas vivre!*”—(“The poor child, he doesn’t know how to live.”)

No, my friends, believe me, it is not the going without education at all that we have most to dread. The real thing to be feared is getting a bad one. There are all sorts—good, and very good; bad, and very bad. The children of rich people often get the worst education that is to be had for money; the children of the poor often get the best for nothing. And you have really these two things now to decide for yourselves in England before you

can take one quite safe practical step in the matter, namely, first, what a good education is ; and, secondly, who is likely to give it you.

What it is? "Everybody knows that," I suppose you would most of you answer. "Of course—to be taught to read, and write, and cast accounts ; and to learn geography, and geology, and astronomy, and chemistry, and German, and French, and Italian, and Latin, and Greek, and the aboriginal Aryan language."

Well, when you have learned all that, what would you do next. "Next? Why then we should be perfectly happy, and make as much money as ever we liked, and we would turn out our toes before any company." I am not sure myself, and I don't think you can be, of any one of these three things. At least, as to making you very happy, I know something, myself, of nearly all these matters—not much, but still quite as much as most men under the ordinary chances of life, with a fair education, are likely to get together—and I assure you the knowledge does not make me happy at all. When I was a boy I used to like seeing the sunrise. I didn't know, then, there were any spots on the sun ; now I do, and am always frightened lest any more should come. When I was a boy, I used to care about pretty stones. I got some Bristol diamonds at Bristol, and some dog-tooth spar in Derbyshire ; my whole collection had cost, perhaps, three half-crowns, and was worth considerably less ; and I knew nothing whatever, rightly, about any single stone in it ;—

could not even spell their names : but words cannot tell the joy they used to give me. Now, I have a collection of minerals worth, perhaps, from two to three thousand pounds ; and I know more about some of them than most other people. But I am not a whit happier, either for my knowledge, or possessions, for other geologists dispute my theories, to my grievous indignation and discontentment ; and I am miserable about all my best specimens, because there are better in the British Museum.

No, I assure you, knowledge by itself will not make you happy ; still less will it make you rich. Perhaps you thought I was writing carelessly when I told you, last month, "science did not pay." But you don't know what science is. You fancy it means mechanical art ; and so you have put a statue of Science on the Holborn Viaduct, with a steam-engine regulator in its hands. My ingenious friends, science has no more to do with making steam-engines than with making breeches ; though she condescends to help you a little in such necessary (or it may be, conceivably, in both cases, sometimes unnecessary) businesses. Science lives only in quiet places, and with odd people, mostly poor. Mr. John Kepler, for instance, who is found by Sir Henry Wotton "in the picturesque green country by the shores of the Donau, in a little black tent in a field, convertible, like a windmill, to all quarters, a camera-obscura, in fact Mr. John invents rude toys, writes almanacks, practises medicine, for good reasons, his encouragement from the Holy Roman Empire and mankind

being a pension of 18*l.* a year, and that hardly ever paid." * That is what one gets by star-gazing, my friends. And you cannot be simple enough, even in April, to think I got my three thousand pounds'-worth of minerals by studying mineralogy? Not so; they were earned for me by hard labour; my father's in England, and many a sun-burnt vineyard-dresser's in Spain.

"What business had you, in your idleness, with their earnings then?" you will perhaps ask. None, it may be; I will tell you in a little while how you may find that out; it is not to the point now. But it is to the point that you should observe I have not kept their earnings, the portion of them, at least, with which I bought minerals. That part of their earnings is all gone to feed the miners in Cornwall, or on the Hartz Mountains, and I have only got for myself a few pieces of glittering (not always that, but often unseemly) stone, which neither vinedressers nor miners cared for; which you yourselves would have to learn many hard words, much cramp mathematics, and useless chemistry, in order to care for: which, if ever you did care for, as I do, would most likely only make you envious of the British Museum, and occasionally uncomfortable if any harm happened to your dear stones. I have a piece of red oxide of copper, for instance, which grieves me poignantly by losing its colour; and a crystal of sulphide of lead, with a chip in it, which causes me a great

* Carlyle, *Frederick*, vol. i. p. 321 (first edition).

deal of concern—in April ; because I see it then by the fresh sunshine.

My oxide of copper and sulphide of lead you will not then wisely envy me. Neither, probably, would you covet a handful of hard brown gravel, with a rough pebble in it, whitish, and about the size of a pea ; nor a few grains of apparently brass filings with which the gravel is mixed. I was but a Fool to give good money for such things, you think ? It may well be. I gave thirty pounds for that handful of gravel, and the miners who found it were ill-paid then ; and it is not clear to me that this produce of their labour was the best possible. Shall we consider of it, with the help of the Cambridge Catechism ? at the tenth page of which you will find that Mr. Mill's definition of productive labour is—"That which produces utilities fixed and embodied in material objects."

This is very fine—indeed, superfine—English ; but I can, perhaps, make the meaning of the Greatest Thinker in England a little more lucid for you by vulgarizing his terms.

"Object," you must always remember, is fine English for "Thing." It is a semi-Latin word, and properly means a thing "thrown in your way ;" so that if you put "ion" to the end of it, it becomes Objection. We will rather say "Thing," if you have no objection—you and I. A "Material" thing, then, of course, signifies something solid and tangible. It is very necessary for Political Economists always to insert this word "material," lest

people should suppose that there was any use or value in Thought or Knowledge, and other such immaterial objects.

“Embodied” is a particularly elegant word; but superfluous, because you know it would not be possible that utility should be Disembodied, as long as it was in a material object. But when you wish to express yourself as thinking in a great manner, you may say—as, for instance, when you are supping vegetable soup—that your power of doing so conveniently and gracefully is “Embodied” in a spoon.

“Fixed” is, I am afraid, rashly, as well as superfluously, introduced into his definition by Mr. Mill. It is conceivable that some Utilities may be also volatile, or planetary, even when embodied. But at last we come to the great word in the great definition—“Utility.”

And this word, I am sorry to say, puzzles me most of all; for I never myself saw a Utility, either out of the body, or in it, and should be much embarrassed if ordered to produce one in either state.

But it is fortunate for us that all this seraphic language, reduced to the vulgar tongue, will become, though fallen in dignity and reduced in dimension, perfectly intelligible. The Greatest Thinker in England means by these beautiful words to tell you that Productive labour is labour that produces a Useful Thing. Which, indeed, perhaps, you knew—or, without the assistance of great thinkers, might have known, before now. But if Mr. Mill had

said so much, simply, you might have been tempted to ask farther—"What things are useful, and what are not?" And as Mr. Mill does not know, nor any other Political Economist going,—and as they therefore particularly wish nobody to ask them,—it is convenient to say, instead of "useful things," "utilities fixed and embodied in material objects," because that sounds so very like complete and satisfactory information, that one is ashamed, after getting it, to ask for any more.

But it is not, therefore, less discouraging that for the present I have got no help towards discovering whether my handful of gravel with the white pebble in it was worth my thirty pounds or not. I am afraid it is not a useful thing to *me*. It lies at the back of a drawer, locked up all the year round. I never look at it now, for I know all about it: the only satisfaction I have for my money is knowing that nobody else can look at it; and if nobody else wanted to, I shouldn't even have that.

"What did you buy it for then?" you will ask. Well, if you must have the truth, because I was a Fool, and wanted it. Other people have bought such things before me. The white stone is a diamond, and the apparent brass filings are gold dust; but, I admit, nobody ever yet wanted such things who was in their right senses. Only now, as I have candidly answered all your questions, will you answer one of mine? If I hadn't bought it, what would you have had me do with my money? Keep *that* in the drawer instead?—or at my banker's, till it grew out of

thirty pounds into sixty and a hundred, in fulfilment of the law respecting seed sown in good ground ?

Doubtless, that would have been more meritorious for the time. But when I had got the sixty or the hundred pounds—what should I have done with *them* ? The question only becomes doubly and trebly serious ; and all the more, to me, because, when I told you last January that I had bought a picture for a thousand pounds, permitting myself in that folly for your advantage, as I thought, hearing that many of you wanted art Patronage, and wished to live by painting,—one of your own popular organs, the *Liverpool Daily Courier*, of February 9th, said, “it showed want of taste,—of tact,” and was “something like a mockery,” to tell you so ! I am not to buy pictures, therefore, it seems ;—you like to be kept in mines and tunnels, and occasionally blown hither and thither, or crushed flat, rather than live by painting, in good light, and with the chance of remaining all day in a whole and unextended skin ? But what *shall* I buy, then, with the next thirty pieces of gold I can scrape together ? Precious things have been bought, indeed, and sold, before now for thirty pieces, even of silver, but with doubtful issue. The over-charitable person who was bought to be killed at that price, indeed, advised the giving of alms ; but you won’t have alms, I suppose—you are so independent, nor go into alms-houses—(and, truly, I did not much wonder, as I walked by the old church of Abingdon, a Sunday or two since, where the alms-houses are set round the churchyard,

and under the level of it, and with a cheerful view of it, except that the tombstones slightly block the light of the lattice-windows; with beautiful texts from Scripture over the doors, to remind the paupers still more emphatically that, highly blessed as they were, they were yet mortal)—you won't go into alms-houses; and all the clergy in London have been shrieking against alms-giving to the lower poor this whole winter long, till I am obliged, whenever I want to give anybody a penny, to look up and down the street first, to see if a clergyman's coming. Of course, I know I might buy as many iron railings as I please, and be praised; but I've no room for them. I can't well burn more coals than I do, because of the blacks, which spoil my books; and the Americans won't let me buy any blacks alive, or else I would have some black dwarfs with parrots, such as one sees in the pictures of Paul Veronese. I should of course like, myself, above all things, to buy a pretty white girl, with a title—and I should get great praise for doing that—only I haven't money enough. White girls come dear, even when one buys them only like coals, for fuel. The Duke of Bedford, indeed, bought Joan of Arc, from the French, to burn, for only ten thousand pounds, and a pension of three hundred a year to the Bastard of Vendôme—and I could and would have given that for her, and not burnt her; but one hasn't such a chance every day. *Will* you, any of you, have the goodness—beggars, clergymen, workmen, seraphic doctors, Mr. Mill, Mr. Fawcett or the Po-

litical-Economic Professor of my own University—I challenge you, I beseech you, all and singly, to tell me what I am to do with my money?

I mean, indeed, to give you my own poor opinion on the subject in May; though I feel the more embarrassed in the thought of doing so, because, in this present April, I am so much a fool as not even to know clearly whether I have got any money or not. I know, indeed, that things go on at present as if I had; but it seems to me that there must be a mistake somewhere, and that some day it will be found out. For instance, I have seven thousand pounds in what we call the Funds or Founded things; but I am not comfortable about the Founding of them. All that I can see of them is a square bit of paper, with some ugly printing on it, and all that I know of them is that this bit of paper gives me a right to tax you every year, and make you pay me two hundred pounds out of your wages; which is very pleasant for me; but how long will you be pleased to do so? Suppose it should occur to you, any summer's day, that you had better not? Where would my seven thousand pounds be? In fact, where are they now? We call ourselves a rich people; but you see this seven thousand pounds of mine has no real existence—it only means that you, the workers, are poorer by two hundred pounds a year than you would be if I hadn't got it. And this is surely a very odd kind of money for a country to boast of. Well, then, besides this, I have a bit of low land at Greenwich, which, as far as I see anything of it,

is not money at all, but only mud ; and would be of as little use to me as my handful of gravel in the drawer, if it were not that an ingenious person has found out that he can make chimney-pots of it ; and, every quarter, he brings me fifteen pounds off the price of his chimney-pots ; so that I am always sympathetically glad when there's a high wind, because then I know my ingenious friend's business is thriving. But suppose it should come into his head, in any less windy month than this April, that he had better bring me none of the price of his chimneys ? And even though he should go on, as I hope he will, patiently, —(and I always give him a glass of wine when he brings me the fifteen pounds),—is this really to be called money of mine ? And is the country any richer because, when anybody's chimney-pot is blown down in Greenwich, he must pay something extra, to me, before he can put it on again ?

Then, also, I have some houses in Marylebone, which, though indeed very ugly and miserable, yet, so far as they are actual beams and brick-bats put into shape, I might have imagined to be real property ; only, you know, Mr. Mill says that people who build houses don't produce a commodity, but only do us a service. So I suppose my houses are not "utilities embodied in material objects" (and indeed they don't look much like it) ; but I know I have the right to keep anybody from living in them unless they pay me ; only suppose some day the Irish faith, that people ought to be lodged for nothing, should

become an English one also—where would my money be? Where is it now, except as a chronic abstraction from other people's earnings?

So again, I have some land in Yorkshire—some Bank “Stock” (I don't in the least know what *that* is)—and the like; but whenever I examine into these possessions, I find they melt into one or another form of future taxation, and that I am always sitting—(if I were working I shouldn't mind, but I am only sitting) at the receipt of Custom, and a Publican as well as a Sinner. And then, to embarrass the business further yet, I am quite at variance with other people about the place where this money, whatever it is, comes from. The *Spectator*, for instance, in its article of 25th June of last year, on Mr. Goschen's “lucid and forcible speech of Friday week,” says that “the country is once more getting rich, and the money is filtering downwards to the actual workers.” But whence, then, did it filter down to us, the actual idlers? This is really a question very appropriate for April. For such golden rain raineth *not* every day, but in a showery and capricious manner, out of heaven, upon us; mostly, as far as I can judge, rather pouring down than filtering upon idle persons, and running in thinner dribbles, but I hope purer for the filtering process, to the “actual workers.” But where *does* it come from? and in the times of drought between the showers, where does it go to? “The country is getting rich again,” says the *Spectator*; but then, if the April clouds fail, may it get poor again? And when it

again becomes poor,—when, last 25th of June, it *was* poor, —what becomes, or had become, of the money? Was it verily lost, or only torpid in the winter of our discontent? or was it sown and buried in corruption, to be raised in a multifold power? When we are in a panic about our money, what do we think is going to happen to it? Can no economist teach us to keep it safe after we have once got it? nor any “beloved physician,”—as I read the late Sir James Simpson is called in Edinburgh—guard even our solid gold against death, or at least, fits of an apoplectic character, alarming to the family?

All these questions trouble me greatly; but still to me the strangest point in the whole matter is, that though we idlers always speak as if we were enriched by Heaven, and became ministers of its bounty to *you*; if ever you think the ministry slack, and take to definite pillage of us, no good ever comes of it to you; but the sources of wealth seem to be stopped instantly, and you are reduced to the small gain of making gloves of our skins; while, on the contrary, as long as we continue pillaging you, there seems no end to the profitableness of the business; but always, however bare we strip you, presently, more, to be had. For instance—just read this little bit out of Froissart—about the English army in France before the battle of Crécy:—

“We will now return to the expedition of the King of England. Sir Godfrey de Harcourt, as marshal, advanced before the **King**, with the vanguard of five hundred armed men and two thousand archers,

and rode on for six or seven leagues' distance from the main army, burning and destroying the country. They found it rich and plentiful, abounding in all things; the barns full of every sort of corn, and the houses with riches: the inhabitants at their ease, having cars, carts, horses, swine, sheep, and everything in abundance which the country afforded. They seized whatever they chose of all these good things, and brought them to the King's army; but the soldiers did not give any account to their officers, or to those appointed by the King, of the gold and silver they took, which they kept to themselves. When they were come back, with all their booty safely packed in waggons, the Earl of Warwick, the Earl of Suffolk, the Lord Thomas Holland, and the Lord Reginald Cobham, took their march, with their battalion on the right, burning and destroying the country in the same way that Sir Godfrey de Harcourt was doing. The King marched, with the main body, between these two battalions; and every night they all encamped together. The King of England and Prince of Wales had, in their battalion, about three thousand men-at-arms, six thousand archers, ten thousand infantry, without counting those that were under the marshals; and they marched on in the manner I have before mentioned, burning and destroying the country, but without breaking their line of battle. They did not turn towards Coutances, but advanced to St. Lo, in Coutantin, which in those days was a very rich and commercial town, and worth three such towns as Coutances. In the town of St. Lo was much drapery, and many wealthy inhabitants; among them you might count eight or nine score that were engaged in commerce. When the King of England was come near to the town, he encamped; he would not lodge in it for fear of fire. He sent, therefore, his advanced guard forward, who soon conquered it, at a trifling loss, and completely plundered it. No one can imagine the quantity of riches they found in it, nor the number of bales of cloth. If there had been any purchasers, they might have bought enough at a very cheap rate.

"The English then advanced towards Caen, which is a much larger town, stronger, and fuller of draperies and all other sorts of merchandize, rich citizens, noble dames and damsels, and fine churches.

"On this day (Froissart does not say what day) the English rose

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“The King of England remained at the nunnery of Poissy to the middle in August, and celebrated there the feast of the Virgin Mary.”

It all reads at first, you see, just like a piece out of the newspapers of last month; but there are material differences, notwithstanding. We fight inelegantly as well as expensively, with machines instead of bow and spear; we kill about a thousand now to the score then, in settling any quarrel—(Agincourt was won with the loss of less than a hundred men; only 25,000 English altogether were engaged at Crecy; and 12,000, some say only 8,000, at Poitiers); we kill with far ghastlier wounds, crashing bones and flesh together; we leave our wounded necessarily for days and nights in heaps on the fields of battle; we pillage districts twenty times as large, and with completer destruction of more valuable property; and with a destruction as irreparable as it is complete; for if the French or English burnt a church one day, they could build a prettier one the next; but the modern Prussians couldn't even build so much as an imitation of one; we rob on credit, by requisition, with ingenious mercantile prolongations of claim; and we improve contention of arms with contention of tongues, and are able to multiply the rancour of cowardice, and mischief of lying, in universal and permanent print; and so we lose our tempers as well as our money, and become indecent in behaviour as in raggedness; for whereas, in old times, two nations separated by a little pebbly stream

like the Tweed, or even the two halves of one nation, separated by thirty fathoms' depth of salt water (for most of the English knights and all the English kings were French by race, and the best of them by birth also)—would go on pillaging and killing each other century after century, without the slightest ill-feeling towards, or disrespect for one another,—we can neither give anybody a beating courteously, nor take one in good part, or without screaming and lying about it: and finally, we add to these perfected Follies of Action more finely perfected Follies of Inaction; and contrive hitherto unheard-of ways of being wretched through the very abundance of peace; our workmen, here, vowing themselves to idleness, lest they should lower Wages, and there, being condemned by their parishes to idleness lest they should lower Prices; while outside the workhouse all the parishioners are buying anything nasty, so that it be cheap; and, in a word, under the seraphic teaching of Mr. Mill, we have determined at last that it is not Destruction, but Production, that is the cause of human distress; and the “Mutual and Co-operative Colonization Company” declares, ungrammatically, but distinctly, in its circular sent to me on the 13th of last month, as a matter universally admitted, even among Cabinet Ministers—“that it is in the greater increasing power of production and distribution, as compared with demand, enabling the few to do the work of many, that the active cause of the wide-spread poverty among the producing and lower-middle classes lay, which

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say)—supplied punctually on demand, with liberal reduction on quantity ; the roads themselves beautifully public—tramwayed, perhaps—and with gates set open enough for all men to the free, outer, better world, your chosen guide preceding you merrily, thus,—



with music and dancing.

You have always danced too willingly, poor friends, to that player on the viol. We will try to hear, far away, a faint note or two from a more chief musician on stringed instruments, in May, when the time of the Singing of Birds is come.

Faithfully yours,

JOHN RUSKIN.

LETTER V.

"For lo, the winter is past,
The rain is over and gone,
The flowers appear on the earth,
The time of the singing of birds is come,
Arise, oh my fair one, my dove,
And come."

DENMARK HILL,

1st May, 1871.

MY FRIENDS,

It has been asked of me, very justly, why I have hitherto written to you of things you were little likely to care for, in words which it was difficult for you to understand.

I have no fear but that you will one day understand all my poor words,—the saddest of them perhaps too well. But I have great fear that you may never come to understand these written above, which are part of a king's love-song, in one sweet May, of many long since gone.

I fear that for you the wild winter's rain may never pass,—the flowers never appear on the earth;—that for you no bird may ever sing;—for you no perfect Love arise, and fulfil your life in peace.

"And why not for us, as for others?" will you answer me so, and take my fear for you as an insult?

Nay, it is no insult;—nor am I happier than you. For me, the birds do not sing, nor ever will. But they would, for you, if you cared to have it so. When I told you that

you would never understand that love-song, I meant only that you would not desire to understand it.

Are you again indignant with me? Do you think, though you should labour, and grieve, and be trodden down in dishonour all your days, at least you can keep that one joy of Love, and that one honour of Home? Had you, indeed, kept that, you had kept all. But no men yet, in the history of the race, have lost it so piteously. In many a country, and many an age, women have been compelled to labour for their husbands' wealth, or bread; but never until now were they so homeless as to say, like the poor Samaritan, "I have no husband." Women of every country and people have sustained without complaint the labour of fellowship: for the women of the latter days in England it has been reserved to claim the privilege of isolation.

This, then, is the end of your universal education and civilization, and contempt of the ignorance of the Middle Ages, and of their chivalry. Not only do you declare yourselves too indolent to labour for daughters and wives, and too poor to support them; but you have made the neglected and distracted creatures hold it for an honour to be independent of you, and shriek for some hold of the mattock for themselves. Believe it or not, as you may, there has not been so low a level of thought reached by any race, since they grew to be male and female out of starfish, or chickweed, or whatever else they have been made from, by natural selection,—according to modern science

That modern science also, Economic and of other kinds, has reached its climax at last. For it seems to be the appointed function of the nineteenth century to exhibit in all things the elect pattern of perfect Folly, for a warning to the farthest future. Thus the statement of principle which I quoted to you in my last letter, from the circular of the Emigration Society, that it is over-production which is the cause of distress, is accurately the most Foolish thing, not only hitherto ever said by men, but which it is possible for men ever to say, respecting their own business. It is a kind of opposite pole (or negative acme of mortal stupidity) to Newton's discovery of gravitation as an acme of mortal wisdom:—as no wise being on earth will ever be able to make such another wise discovery, so no foolish being on earth will ever be capable of saying such another foolish thing, through all the ages.

And the same crisis has been exactly reached by our natural science, and by our art. It has several times chanced to me, since I began these papers, to have the exact thing shown or brought to me that I wanted for illustration, just in time *—and it happened that on the very

* Here is another curious instance: I have but a minute ago finished correcting these sheets, and take up the *Times* of this morning, April 21st, and find in it the suggestion by the Chancellor of the Exchequer for the removal of exemption from taxation, of Agricultural horses and carts, in the very nick of time to connect it, as a proposal for economic practice, with the statement of economic principle respecting Production, quoted on this page.

day on which I published my last letter, I had to go to the Kensington Museum; and there I saw the most perfectly and roundly ill-done thing which, as yet, in my whole life, I ever saw produced by art. It had a tablet in front of it, bearing this inscription,—

“Statue in black and white marble, a Newfoundland Dog standing on a Serpent, which rests on a marble cushion, the pedestal ornamented with pietra dura fruits in relief.—*English. Present Century. No. I.*”

It was so very right for me, the Kensington people having been good enough to number it “I,” the thing itself being almost incredible in its one-ness; and, indeed, such a punctual accent over the iota of Miscreation,—so absolutely and exquisitely miscreant, that I am not myself capable of conceiving a Number two, or three, or any rivalry or association with it whatsoever. The extremity of its unvirtue consisted, observe, mainly in the quantity of instruction which was abused in it. It showed that the persons who produced it had seen everything, and practised everything; and misunderstood everything they saw, and misapplied everything they did. They had seen Roman work, and Florentine work, and Byzantine work, and Gothic work; and misunderstanding of everything had passed through them as the mud does through earthworms, and here at last was their worm-cast of a Production.

But the second chance that came to me that day, was more significant still. From the Kensington Museum I went to an afternoon tea, at a house where I was sure to

meet some nice people. And among the first I met was an old friend who had been hearing some lectures on botany at the Kensington Museum, and been delighted by them. She is the kind of person who gets good out of everything, and she was quite right in being delighted; besides that, as I found by her account of them, the lectures were really interesting, and pleasantly given. She had expected botany to be dull, and had not found it so, and "had learned so much." On hearing this I proceeded naturally to inquire what; for my idea of her was that before she went to the lectures at all, she had known more botany than she was likely to learn by them. So she told me that she had learned first of all that there "were seven sorts of leaves." Now I have always a great suspicion of the number Seven; because when I wrote the *Seven Lamps of Architecture*, it required all the ingenuity I was master of to prevent them from becoming Eight, or even Nine, on my hands. So I thought to myself that it would be very charming if there were only seven sorts of leaves; but that, perhaps, if one looked the woods and forests of the world carefully through, it was just possible that one might discover as many as eight sorts; and then where would my friend's new knowledge of Botany be? So I said, "That was very pretty; but what more?" Then my friend told me that she had no idea, before, that petals were leaves. On which, I thought to myself that it would not have been any great harm to her if she had remained under her old impression that petals were petals. But I

said, "That was very pretty, too; and what more?" So then my friend told me that the lecturer said, "the object of his lectures would be entirely accomplished if he could convince his hearers that there was no such thing as a flower." Now, in that sentence you have the most perfect and admirable summary given you of the general temper and purposes of modern science. It gives lectures on Botany, of which the object is to show that there is no such thing as a Flower; on Humanity, to show that there is no such thing as a Man; and on Theology, to show there is no such thing as a God. No such thing as a Man, but only a Mechanism; no such thing as a God, but only a series of Forces. The two faiths are essentially one: if — you feel yourself to be only a machine, constructed to be a Regulator of minor machinery, you will put your statue of such science on your Holborn Viaduct, and necessarily recognize only major machinery as regulating *you*.

I must explain the real meaning to you, however, of that saying of the Botanical lecturer, for it has a wide bearing. Some fifty years ago the poet Goethe discovered that all the parts of plants had a kind of common nature, and would change into each other. Now this was a true discovery, and a notable one; and you will find that, in fact, all plants are composed of essentially two parts—the leaf and root—one loving the light, the other darkness; one liking to be clean, the other to be **dirty**; one liking to grow for the most part up, the other for the most part down; and each having faculties and purposes of its own.

But the pure one, which loves the light, has, above all things, the purpose of being married to another leaf, and having child-leaves, and children's children of leaves, to make the earth fair for ever. And when the leaves marry, they put on wedding-robcs, and are more glorious than Solomon in all his glory, and they have feasts of honey and we call them "Flowers."

In a certain sense, therefore, you see the Botanical lecturer was quite right. There are no such things as Flowers—there are only Leaves. Nay, farther than this, there may be a dignity in the less happy, but unwithering leaf, which is, in some sort, better than the brief lily of its bloom;—which the great poets always knew,—well;—Chaucer, before Goethe; and the writer of the First Psalm, before Chaucer. The Botanical lecturer was in a deeper sense than he knew, right.

But in the deepest sense of all, the Botanical lecturer was, to the extremity of wrongness, wrong; for leaf, and root, and fruit exist, all of them, only—that there may be flowers. He disregarded the life and passion of the creature, which were its essence. Had he looked for these, he would have recognized that in the thought of Nature herself, there is, in a plant, nothing else but its flowers.

Now in exactly the sense that modern Science declares there is no such thing as a Flower, it has declared there is no such thing as a Man, but only a transitional form of Ascidians and apes. It may, or may not be true—it is not of the smallest consequence whether it be or not. The

real fact is, that, seen with human eyes, there is nothing else but man ; that all animals and beings beside him are only made that they may change into him ; that the world truly exists only in the presence of Man, acts only in the passion of Man. The essence of Light is in his eyes,—the centre of Force in his soul,—the pertinence of Action in his deeds.

And all true science—which my Savoyard guide rightly scorned me when he thought I had not,—all true science is “savoir vivre.” But all your modern science is the contrary of that. It is “savoir mourir.”

And of its very discoveries, such as they are, it cannot make use.

That telegraphic signalling was a discovery ; and conceivably, some day, may be a useful one. And there was some excuse for your being a little proud when, about last sixth of April (Cœur de Lion’s death-day, and Albert Durer’s), you knotted a copper wire all the way to Bombay, and flashed a message along it, and back.

But what was the message, and what the answer ? Is India the better for what you said to her ? Are you the better for what she replied ?

If not, you have only wasted an all-round-the-world’s length of copper wire,—which is, indeed, about the sum of your doing. If you had had, perchance, two words of common sense to say, though you had taken wearisome time and trouble to send them ;—though you had written them slowly in gold, and sealed them with a hundred seals,

and sent a squadron of ships of the line to carry the scroll, and the squadron had fought its way round the Cape of Good Hope, through a year of storms, with loss of all its ships but one,—the two words of common sense would have been worth the carriage, and more. But you have not anything like so much as that, to say, either to India, or to any other place.

You think it a great triumph to make the sun draw brown landscapes for you. That was also a discovery, and some day may be useful. But the sun had drawn landscapes before for you, not in brown, but in green, and blue, and all imaginable colours, here in England. Not one of you ever looked at them then; not one of you cares for the loss of them now, when you have shut the sun out with smoke, so that he can draw nothing more, except brown blots through a hole in a box. There was a rocky valley between Buxton and Bakewell, once upon a time, divine as the Vale of Tempe; you might have seen the Gods there morning and evening—Apollo and all the sweet Muses of the Light—walking in fair procession on the lawns of it, and to and fro among the pinnacles of its crags. You cared neither for Gods nor grass, but for cash (which you did not know the way to get); you thought you could get it by what the *Times* calls “Rail-road Enterprise.” You Enterprised a Railroad through the valley—you blasted its rocks away, heaped thousands of tons of shale into its lovely stream. The valley is gone, and the Gods with it; and now, every fool in Buxton can

be at Bakewell in half an hour, and every fool in Bakewell at Buxton; which you think a lucrative process of exchange—you Fools Everywhere.

To talk at a distance, when you have nothing to say, though you were ever so near; to go fast from this place to that, with nothing to do either at one or the other: these are powers certainly. Much more, power of increased Production, if you, indeed, had got it, would be something to boast of. But are you so entirely sure that you *have* got it—that the mortal disease of plenty, and afflictive affluence of good things, are all you have to dread?

Observe. A man and a woman, with their children, properly trained, are able easily to cultivate as much ground as will feed them; to build as much wall and roof as will lodge them, and to spin and weave as much cloth as will clothe them. They can all be perfectly happy and healthy in doing this. Supposing that they invent machinery which will build, plough, thresh, cook, and weave, and that they have none of these things any more to do, but may read, or play croquet, or cricket, all day long, I believe myself that they will neither be so good nor so happy as without the machines. But I waive my belief in this matter for the time. I will assume that they become more refined and moral persons, and that idleness is in future to be the mother of all good. But observe, I repeat, the power of your machine is only in enabling them to be idle. It will not enable them to live

better than they did before, nor to live in greater numbers. Get your heads quite clear on this matter. Out of so much ground, only so much living is to be got, with or without machinery. You may set a million of steam-ploughs to work on an acre, if you like—out of that acre only a given number of grains of corn will grow, scratch or scorch it as you will. So that the question is not at all whether, by having more machines, more of you can live. No machines will increase the possibilities of life. They only increase the possibilities of idleness. Suppose, for instance, you could get the oxen in your plough driven by a goblin, who would ask for no pay, not even a cream bowl,—(you have nearly managed to get it driven by an iron goblin, as it is;)—Well, your furrow will take no more seeds than if you had held the stilts yourself. But, instead of holding them, you sit, I presume, on a bank beside the field, under an eglantine;—watch the goblin at his work, and read poetry. Meantime, your wife in the house has also got a goblin to weave and wash for her. And she is lying on the sofa, reading poetry.

Now, as I said, I don't believe you would be happier so, but I am willing to believe it; only, since you are already such brave mechanists, show me at least one or two places where you *are* happier. Let me see one small example of approach to this seraphic condition. *I* can show *you* examples, millions of them, of happy people, made happy by their own industry. Farm after farm I can show you in Bavaria, Switzerland, the Tyrol, and such

other places, where men and women are perfectly happy and good, without any iron servants. Show me, therefore, some English family, with its fiery familiar, happier than these. Or bring me—for I am not inconvincible by any kind of evidence,—bring me the testimony of an English family or two to their increased felicity. Or if you cannot do so much as that, can you convince even themselves of it? They *are* perhaps happy, if only they knew how happy they were; Virgil thought so, long ago, of simple rustics; but you hear at present your steam-propelled rustics are crying out that they are anything else than happy, and that they regard their boasted progress “in the light of a monstrous Sham.” I must tell you one little thing, however, which greatly perplexes my imagination of the relieved ploughman sitting under his rose bower, reading poetry. I have told it you before, indeed, but I forget where. There was really a great festivity, and expression of satisfaction in the new order of things, down in Cumberland, a little while ago; some first of May, I think it was, a country festival, such as the old heathens, who had no iron servants, used to keep with piping and dancing. So I thought, from the liberated country people—their work all done for them by goblins—we should have some extraordinary piping and dancing. But there was no dancing at all, and they could not even provide their own piping. They had their goblin to Pipe for them. They walked in procession after their steam plough, and their steam plough whistled

to them occasionally in the most melodious manner it could. Which seemed to me, indeed, a return to more than Arcadian simplicity; for in old Arcadia, plough-boys truly whistled as they went, for want of thought; whereas, here was verily a large company walking without thought, but not having any more even the capacity of doing their own Whistling.

But next, as to the inside of the house. Before you got your power-looms, a woman could always make herself a chemise and petticoat of bright and pretty appearance. I have seen a Bavarian peasant-woman at church in Munich, looking a much grander creature, and more beautifully dressed, than any of the crossed and embroidered angels in Hesse's high-art frescoes; (which happened to be just above her, so that I could look from one to the other). Well, here you are, in England, served by household demons, with five hundred fingers, at least, weaving, for one that used to weave in the days of Minerva. You ought to be able to show me five hundred dresses for one that used to be; tidiness ought to have become five hundred fold tidier; tapestry should be increased into cinquecento-fold iridescence of tapestry. Not only your peasant-girl ought to be lying on the sofa reading poetry, but she ought to have in her wardrobe five hundred petticoats instead of one. Is that, indeed, your issue? or are you only on a curiously crooked way to it?

It is just possible, indeed, that you may not have been allowed to get the use of the goblin's work—that other

people may have got the use of it, and you none; because, perhaps, you have not been able to evoke goblins wholly for your own personal service; but have been borrowing goblins from the capitalist, and paying interest, in the "position of William," on ghostly self-going planes: but suppose you had laid by capital enough, yourselves, to hire all the demons in the world,—nay,—all that are inside of it; are you quite sure you know what you might best set them to work at? and what "useful things" you should command them to make for you? I told you, last month, that no economist going (whether by steam or ghost,) knew what are useful things and what are not. Very few of you know, yourselves, except by bitter experience of the want of them. And no demons, either of iron or spirit, can ever make them.

There are three Material things, not only useful, but essential to Life. No one "knows how to live" till he has got them.

These are, Pure Air, Water, and Earth.

There are three Immaterial things, not only useful, but essential to Life. No one knows how to live till he has got them also.

These are, Admiration, Hope, and Love.*

Admiration—the power of discerning and taking delight in what is beautiful in visible Form, and lovely in human Character; and, necessarily, striving to produce

* Wordsworth, *Excursion*, Book 4th; in Moxon's edition, 1857 (stupidly without numbers to lines), vol. vi. p. 135.

what is beautiful in form, and to become what is lovely in character.

Hope—the recognition, by true Foresight, of better things to be reached hereafter, whether by ourselves or others; necessarily issuing in the straightforward and undisappointable effort to advance, according to our proper power, the gaining of them.

Love, both of family and neighbour, faithful, and satisfied.

These are the six chiefly useful things to be got by Political Economy, when it *has* become a science. I will briefly tell you what modern Political Economy—the great “*savoir mourir*”—is doing with them.

The first three, I said, are Pure Air, Water, and Earth.

Heaven gives you the main elements of these. You can destroy them at your pleasure, or increase, almost without limit, the available quantities of them.

You can vitiate the air by your manner of life, and of death, to any extent. You might easily vitiate it so as to bring such a pestilence on the globe as would end all of you. You or your fellows, German and French, are at present busy in vitiating it to the best of your power in every direction;—chiefly at this moment with corpses, and animal and vegetable ruin in war: changing men, horses, and garden-stuff into noxious gas. But everywhere, and all day long, you are vitiating it with foul chemical exhalations; and the horrible nests, which you call towns, are

little more than laboratories for the distillation into heaven of venomous smokes and smells, mixed with effluvia from decaying animal matter, and infectious miasmata from purulent disease.

On the other hand, your power of purifying the air, by dealing properly and swiftly with all substances in corruption; by absolutely forbidding noxious manufactures; and by planting in all soils the trees which cleanse and invigorate earth and atmosphere,—is literally infinite. You might make every breath of air you draw, food.

Secondly, your power over the rain and river-waters of the earth is infinite. You can bring rain where you will, by planting wisely and tending carefully;—drought, where you will, by ravage of woods and neglect of the soil. You might have the rivers of England as pure as the crystal of the rock;—beautiful in falls, in lakes, in living pools;—so full of fish that you might take them out with your hands instead of nets. Or you may do always as you have done now, turn every river of England into a common sewer, so that you cannot so much as baptize an English baby but with filth, unless you hold its face out in the rain; and even *that* falls dirty.

Then for the third, Earth,—meant to be nourishing for you, and blossoming. You have learned, about it, that there is no such thing as a flower; and as far as your scientific hands and scientific brains, inventive of explosive and deathful, instead of blossoming and life-giving, Dust,

can contrive, you have turned the Mother-Earth, Deme-
ter,* into the Avenger-Earth, Tisiphone—with the voice of
your brother's blood crying out of it, in one wild harmony
round all its murderous sphere.

* Read this, for instance, concerning the Gardens of Paris:—one sen-
tence in the letter is omitted; I will give it in full elsewhere, with its
necessary comments:—

“ *To the Editor of the Times.*

“ *5th April, 1871.*

“ SIR,—As the paragraph you quoted on Monday from the *Field* gives
no idea of the destruction in the gardens round Paris, if you can spare
me a very little space I will endeavour to supplement it.

“ The public gardens in the interior of Paris, including the planting on
the greater number of the Boulevards, are in a condition perfectly sur-
prising when one considers the sufferings even well-to-do persons had to
endure for want of fuel during the siege. Some of them, like the little
oases in the centre of the Louvre, even look as pretty as ever. After
a similar ordeal it is probable we should not have a stick left in London,
and the presence of the very handsome planes on the Boulevards, and
large trees in the various squares and gardens, after the winter of 1870-
71, is most creditable to the population. But when one goes beyond the
Champs Elysées and towards the Bois, down the once beautiful Avenue
de l'Impératrice, a sad scene of desolation presents itself. A year ago it
was the finest avenue garden in existence; now a considerable part of
the surface where troops were camped is about as filthy and as cheerless
as Leicester Square or a sparsely furnished rubbish yard.

“ The view into the once richly-wooded Bois from the huge and ugly
banks of earth which now cross the noble roads leading into it is deso-
late indeed, the stumps of the trees cut down over a large extent of its
surface reminding one of the dreary scenes observable in many parts of
Canada and the United States, where the stumps of the burnt or cut-
down pines are allowed to rot away for years. The zone of ruins round
the vast belt of fortifications I need not speak of, nor of the other zone
of destruction round each of the forts, as here houses and gardens and
all have disappeared. But the destruction in the wide zone occupied
by French and Prussian outposts is beyond description. I got to Paris
the morning after the shooting of Generals Clement Thomas and Le-

That is what you have done for the Three Material Useful Things.

Then for the Three Immaterial Useful Things. For Admiration, you have learnt contempt and conceit. There is no lovely thing ever yet done by man that you care for, or can understand; but you are persuaded you are able to do much finer things yourselves. You gather,

comte, and in consequence did not see so much of it as I otherwise might have done; but round the villages of Sceaux, Bourg-la-Reine, L'Hay, Vitry, and Villejuif, I saw an amount of havoc which the subscriptions to the French Horticultural Relief Fund will go but a very small way to repair. Notwithstanding all his revolutions and wars, the Frenchman usually found time to cultivate a few fruit-trees, and the neighbourhood of the villages above mentioned were only a few of many covered by nurseries of young trees. When I last visited Vitry, in the autumn of 1868, the fields and hill-sides around were everywhere covered with trees; now the view across them is only interrupted by stumps about a foot high. When at Vitry on the 28th of March, I found the once fine nursery of M. Honoré Desfresne deserted, and many acres once covered with large stock and specimens cleared to the ground. And so it was in numerous other cases. It may give some notion of the effect of the war on the gardens and nurseries around Paris, when I state that, according to returns made up just before my visit to Vitry and Villejuif, it was found that round these two villages alone 2,400,400 fruit and other trees were destroyed. As to the private gardens, I cannot give a better idea of them than by describing the materials composing the protecting bank of a battery near Sceaux. It was made up of mattresses, sofas, and almost every other large article of furniture, with the earth stowed between. There were, in addition, nearly forty orange and oleander tubs gathered from the little gardens in the neighbourhood visible in various parts of this ugly bank. One nurseryman at Sceaux, M. Keteleer, lost 1,500 vols. of books, which were not taken to Germany, but simply mutilated and thrown out of doors to rot. . . . Multiply these few instances by the number of districts occupied by the belligerents during the war, and some idea of the effects of glory on gardening in France may be obtained.

“W. ROBINSON.”

and exhibit together, as if equally instructive, what is infinitely bad, with what is infinitely good. You do not know which is which; you instinctively prefer the Bad, and do more of it. You instinctively hate the Good, and destroy it.*

Then, secondly, for Hope. You have not so much spirit of it in you as to begin any plan which will not pay for ten years; nor so much intelligence of it in you, (either politicians or workmen), as to be able to form one clear idea of what you would like your country to become.

Then, thirdly, for Love. You were ordered by the Founder of your religion to love your neighbour as yourselves.

You have founded an entire Science of Political Economy, on what you have stated to be the constant instinct of man—the desire to defraud his neighbour.

And you have driven your women mad, so that they ask no more for Love, nor for fellowship with you; but stand against you, and ask for “justice.”

* Last night (I am writing this on the 18th of April) I got a letter from Venice, bringing me the, I believe, too well-grounded, report that the Venetians have requested permission from the government of Italy to pull down their Ducal Palace, and “rebuild” it. Put up a horrible model of it, in its place, that is to say, for which their architects may charge a commission. Meantime, all their canals are choked with human dung, which they are too poor to cart away, but throw out at their windows.

And all the great thirteenth-century cathedrals in France have been destroyed, within my own memory, only that architects might charge a commission for putting up false models of them in their place.

Are there any of you who are tired of all this? Any of you, Landlords or Tenants? Employers or Workmen?

Are there any landlords,—any masters,—who would like better to be served by men than by iron devils?

Any tenants, any workmen, who can be true to their leaders and to each other? who can vow to work and to live faithfully, for the sake of the joy of their homes?

Will any such give the tenth of what they have, and of what they earn,—not to emigrate with, but to stay in England with; and do what is in their hands and hearts to make her a happy England?

I am not rich; (as people now estimate riches), and great part of what I have is already engaged in maintaining art-workmen, or for other objects more or less of public utility. The tenth of whatever is left to me, estimated as accurately as I can, (you shall see the accounts,) I will make over to you in perpetuity, with the best security that English law can give, on Christmas Day of this year, with engagement to add the tithe of whatever I earn afterwards. Who else will help, with little or much? the object of such fund being, to begin, and gradually—no matter how slowly—to increase, the buying and securing of land in England, which shall not be built upon, but cultivated by Englishmen, with their own hands, and such help of force as they can find in wind and wave.

I do not care with how many, or how few, this thing is begun, nor on what inconsiderable scale,—if it be but in two or three poor men's gardens. So much, at least, I

can buy, myself, and give them. If no help come, I have done and said what I could, and there will be an end. If any help come to me, it is to be on the following conditions:—We will try to make some small piece of English ground, beautiful, peaceful, and fruitful. We will have no steam-engines upon it, and no railroads; we will have no untended or unthought-of creatures on it; none wretched, but the sick; none idle, but the dead. We will have no liberty upon it; but instant obedience to known law, and appointed persons: no equality upon it; but recognition of every betterness that we can find, and reprobation of every worseness. When we want to go anywhere, we will go there quietly and safely, not at forty miles an hour in the risk of our lives; when we want to carry anything anywhere, we will carry it either on the backs of beasts, or on our own, or in carts, or boats; we will have plenty of flowers and vegetables in our gardens, plenty of corn and grass in our fields,—and few bricks. We will have some music and poetry; the children shall learn to dance to it and sing it;—perhaps some of the old people, in time, may also. We will have some art, moreover; we will at least try if, like the Greeks, we can't make some pots. The Greeks used to paint pictures of gods on their pots; we, probably, cannot do as much, but we may put some pictures of insects on them, and reptiles;—butterflies, and frogs, if nothing better. There was an excellent old potter in France who used to put frogs and vipers into his dishes, to the admi-

ration of mankind; we can surely put something nicer than that. Little by little, some higher art and imagination may manifest themselves among us; and feeble rays of science may dawn for us. Botany, though too dull to dispute the existence of flowers; and history, though too simple to question the nativity of men;—nay—even perhaps an uncalculating and uncovetous wisdom, as of rude Magi, presenting, at such nativity, gifts of gold and frankincense.

Faithfully yours,

JOHN RUSKIN.

LETTER VI.

DENMARK HILL,

MY FRIENDS,

1st June, 1871.*

THE main purpose of these letters having been stated in the last of them, it is needful that I should tell you why I approach the discussion of it in this so desultory way, writing (as it is too true that I must continue to write,) "of things that you little care for, in words that you cannot easily understand."

I write of things you little care for, knowing that what you least care for is, at this juncture, of the greatest moment to you.

And I write in words you are little likely to understand, because I have no wish (rather the contrary) to tell you anything that you can understand without taking trouble. You usually read so fast that you can catch nothing but

* I think it best to publish this letter as it was prepared for press on the morning of the 25th of last month, at Abingdon, before the papers of that day had reached me. You may misinterpret its tone; and think it is written without feeling; but I will endeavour to give you in my next letter, a brief statement of the meaning, to the French and to all other nations, of this war, and its results: in the meantime, trust me, there is probably no other man living to whom, in the abstract, and irrespective of loss of family and property, the ruin of Paris is so great a sorrow as it is to me.

the echo of your own opinions, which, of course, you are pleased to see in print. I neither wish to please nor displease you; but to provoke you to think; to lead you to think accurately; and help you to form, perhaps, some different opinions from those you have now.

Therefore, I choose that you shall pay me the price of two pots of beer, twelve times in the year, for my advice, each of you who wants it. If you like to think of me as a quack doctor, you are welcome; and you may consider the large margins, and thick paper, and ugly pictures of my book, as my caravan, drum, and skeleton. You would probably, if invited in that manner, buy my pills; and I should make a great deal of money out of you; but being an honest doctor, I still mean you to pay me what you ought. You fancy, doubtless, that I write—as most other political writers do—my “opinions;” and that one man’s opinion is as good as another’s. You are much mistaken. When I only opine things, I hold my tongue; and work till I more than opine—until I know them. If the things prove unknowable, I with final perseverance, hold my tongue about them, and recommend a like practice to other people. If the things prove knowable, as soon as I know them, I am ready to write about them, if need be; not till then. That is what people call my “arrogance.” They write and talk themselves, habitually, of what they know nothing about; they cannot in any wise conceive the state of mind of a person who will not speak till he knows; and then tells them, serenely, “This is so; you

may find it out for yourselves, if you choose ; but, however little you may choose it, the thing is still so."

Now it has cost me twenty years of thought, and of hard reading, to learn what I have to tell you in these pamphlets ; and you will find, if you choose to find, it is true ; and may prove, if you choose to prove, that it is useful : and I am not in the least minded to compete for your audience with the " opinions " in your damp journals, morning and evening, the black of them coming off on your fingers, and beyond all washing, into your brains. It is no affair of mine whether you attend to me or not ; but yours wholly ; my hand is weary of pen-holding, my heart is sick of thinking ; for my own part, I would not write you these pamphlets though you would give me a barrel of beer, instead of two pints, for them ;—I write them wholly for your sake ; I choose that you shall have them decently printed on cream-coloured paper, and with a margin underneath, which you can write on, if you like. That is also for your sake ; it is a proper form of book for any man to have who can keep his books clean ; and if he cannot, he has no business with books at all ; it costs me ten pounds to print a thousand copies, and five more to give you a picture ; and a penny off my sevenpence to send you the book—a thousand sixpences are twenty-five pounds ; when you have bought a thousand *Fors* of me, I shall therefore have five pounds for my trouble—and my single shopman, Mr. Allen, five pounds for his ; we won't work for less, either of us ; not that we would not, were

it good for you ; but it would be by no means good. And I mean to sell all my large books, henceforward, in the same way ; well printed, well bound, and at a fixed price ; and the trade may charge a proper and acknowledged profit for their trouble in retailing the book. Then the public know what they are about, and so will tradesmen ; I, the first producer, answer, to the best of my power, for the quality of the book ;—paper ; binding, eloquence, and all : the retail-dealer charges what he ought to charge, openly ; and if the public do not choose to give it, they can't get the book. That is what I call legitimate business. Then as for this misunderstanding of me—remember that it is really not easy to understand anything, which you have not heard before, if it relates to a complex subject ; also it is quite easy to misunderstand things that you are hearing every day—which seem to you of the intelligiblest sort. But I *can* only write of things in my own way and as they come into my head ; and of the things I care for, whether you care for them or not, as yet. I will answer for it, you must care for some of them, in time.

To take an instance close to my hand : you would of course think it little conducive to your interests that I should give you any account of the wild hyacinths which are opening in flakes of blue fire, this day, within a couple of miles of me, in the glades of Bagley wood through which the Empress Maude fled in the snow, (and which, by the way, I slink through, myself, in some discomfort, lest the gamekeeper of the college of the gracious Apes

the St. John should catch sight of me; not that he would ultimately decline to make a distinction between a poacher and a professor, but that I dislike the trouble of giving an account of myself.) Or, if even you would bear with a scientific sentence or two about them, explaining to you that they were only green leaves turned blue, and that it was of no consequence whether they were either; and that, as flowers, they were scientifically to be considered as not in existence,—you will, I fear, throw my letter, even though it has cost you sevenpence, aside at once, when I remark to you that these wood-hyacinths of Bagley have something to do with the battle of Marathon, and if you knew it, are of more vital interest to you than even the Match Tax.

Nevertheless, as I shall feel it my duty, some day, to speak to you of Theseus and his vegetable soup, so to-day, I think it necessary to tell you that the wood-hyacinth is the best English representative of the tribe of flowers which the Greeks called “Asphodel,” and which they thought the heroes who had fallen in the battle of Marathon, or in any other battle, fought in just quarrel, were to be rewarded, and enough rewarded, by living in fields full of; fields called, by them, Elysian, or the Fields of Coning, as you and I talk of the good time “Coming,” though with perhaps different views as to the nature of the to be expected goodness.

Now what the Chancellor of the Exchequer said the other day to the Civil Engineers (see *Saturday Review*,

April 29th), is entirely true; namely, that in any of our colliery or cartridge-manufactory explosions, we send as many men (or women) into Elysium as were likely to get there after the battle of Marathon;* and that is, indeed, like the rest of our economic arrangements, very fine, and pleasant to think upon; neither may it be doubted on modern principles of religion and equality, that every collier and cartridge-filler is as fit for Elysium as any heathen could be; and that in all these respects the battle of Marathon is no more deserving of English notice. But what I want you to reflect upon, as of moment to you, is whether you *really* care for the hyacinthine Elysium you are going to? and if you do, why you should not live a little while in Elysium here, instead of waiting so patiently, and working so hardly, to be blown or flattened into it? The hyacinths will grow well enough on the top of the ground, if you will leave off digging away the bottom of it; and another plant of the asphodel species, which the Greeks thought of more importance even than hyacinths—onions; though, indeed, one dead hero is represented by Lucian as finding something to complain of even in Elysium, because he got nothing but onions there to eat. But it is simply, I assure you, because the French did not understand that hyacinths and onions were the principal

* Of course this was written, and in type, before the late catastrophe in Paris, and the one at Dunkirk is, I suppose, long since forgotten, much more our own good beginning at—Birmingham—was it? I forget, myself, now.

things to fill their existing Elysian Fields, or Champs Elysées, with, but chose to have carriages, and roundabouts instead, that a tax on matches in those fields would be now-a-days, so much more productive than one on Asphodel; and I see that only a day or two since even a poor Punch's show could not play out its play in Elysian peace, but had its corner knocked off by a shell from Mont Valérien, and the dog Toby "seriously alarmed."

One more instance of the things you don't care for, that are vital to you, may be better told now than hereafter.

In my plan for our practical work, in last number, you remember I said, we must try and make some pottery, and have some music, and that we would have no steam-engines. On this I received a singular letter from a resident at Birmingham, advising me that the colours for my pottery must be ground by steam, and my musical instruments constructed by it. To this, as my correspondent was an educated person, and knew Latin, I ventured to answer that porcelain had been painted before the time of James Watt; that even music was not entirely a recent invention; that my poor company, I feared, would deserve no better colours than Apelles and Titian made shift with, or even the Chinese; and that I could not find any notice of musical instruments in the time of David, for instance, having been made by steam.

To this my correspondent again replied that he supposed David's "twangling upon the harp" would have been un-

satisfactory to modern taste ; in which sentiment I concurred with him, (thinking of the Cumberland procession, without dancing, after its sacred, cylindrical Ark). We shall have to be content, however, for our part, with a little “twangling” on such roughly-made harps, or even shells, as the Jews and Greeks got their melody out of, though it must indeed be little conceivable in a modern manufacturing town that a nation could ever have existed which imaginarily dined on onions in Heaven, and made harps of the near relations of turtles on Earth. But, to keep to our crockery, you know I told you that for some time we should not be able to put any pictures of Gods on it ; and you might think that would be of small consequence : but it is of moment that we should at least try—for indeed that old French potter, Palissy, was nearly the last of potters in France, or England either, who could have done so, if anybody had wanted Gods. But nobody in his time did ;—they only wanted Goddesses, of a demi-divine-monde pattern ; Palissy, not well able to produce such, took to moulding innocent frogs and vipers instead, in his dishes ; but at Sèvres and other places for shaping of courtly clay, the charmingest things were done, as you probably saw at the great peace-promoting Exhibition of 1851 ; and not only the first rough potter’s fields, tileries, as they called them, or Tuileries, but the little den where Palissy long after worked under the Louvre, were effaced and forgotten in the glory of the house of France ; until the House of France forgot also that to it, no less than the House of Is

rael, the words were spoken, not by a painted God, "As the clay is in the hands of the potter, so are ye in mine;" and thus the stained and vitrified show of it lasted, as you have seen, until the Tuileries again become the Potter's field, to bury, not strangers in, but their own souls, no more ashamed of Traitorhood, but invoking Traitorhood, as if it covered, instead of constituting, uttermost shame;—until, of the kingdom and its glory there is not a shard left, to take fire out of the hearth.

Left—to men's eyes, I should have written. To their thoughts, is left yet much; for true kingdoms and true glories cannot pass away. What France has had of such remain to her. What any of us can find of such, will remain to us. Will you look back, for an instant, again to the end of my last Letter, p. 99, and consider the state of life described there:—"No liberty, but instant obedience to known law and appointed persons; no equality, but recognition of every betterness and reprobation of every worseness; and none idle but the dead."

I beg you to observe that last condition especially. You will debate for many a day to come the causes that have brought this misery upon France, and there are many; but one is chief—chief cause, now and always, of evil everywhere; and I see it at this moment, in its deadliest form, out of the window of my quiet English inn. It is the 21st of May, and a bright morning, and the sun shines, for once, warmly on the wall opposite, a low one, of ornamental pattern, imitative in brick of wood-work (as if it had been

of wood-work, it would, doubtless, have been painted to look like brick). Against this low decorative edifice leans a ruddy-faced English boy of seventeen or eighteen, in a white blouse and brown corduroy trousers, and a domical felt hat; with the sun, as much as can get under the rim, on his face, and his hands in his pockets; listlessly watching two dogs at play. He is a good boy, evidently, and does not care to turn the play into a fight;* still it is not interesting enough to him, as play, to relieve the extreme distress of his idleness, and he occasionally takes his hands out of his pockets, and claps them at the dogs to startle them.

The ornamental wall he leans against surrounds the county police-office, and the residence at the end of it, appropriately called "Gaol Lodge." This county gaol, police-office, and a large gasometer, have been built by the good people of Abingdon to adorn the principal entrance to their town from the south. It was once quite one of the loveliest, as well as historically interesting, scenes in England. A few cottages and their gardens, sloping down to the river-side, are still left, and an arch or two of the great monastery; but the principal object from the road is now the gaol, and from the river the gasometer. It is curious that since the English have believed (as you will find the editor of the *Liverpool Daily Post*, quoting to you from Macaulay, in his leader of the 9th of this month),

* This was at seven in the morning, he had them fighting at half-past nine.

"the only cure for Liberty is more liberty" (which is true enough, for when you have got all you can, you will be past physis), they always make their gaols conspicuous and ornamental. Now I have no objection, myself, detesting, as I do, every approach to liberty, to a distinct manifestation of gaol, in proper quarters; nay, in the highest and in the close neighbourhood of palaces; perhaps, even, with a convenient passage, and Ponte de' Sospiri, from one to the other, or, at least, a pleasant access by water-gate and down the river; but I do not see why in these days of "incurable" liberty, the prospect in approaching a quiet English county town should be gaol, and nothing else.

That being so, however, the country-boy, in his white blouse, leans placidly against the prison-wall this bright Sunday morning, little thinking what a luminous sign-post he is making of himself, and living gnomon of sun-dial, of which the shadow points sharply to the subtlest cause of the fall of France, and of England, as is too likely, after her.

Your hands in your own pockets, in the morning. That is the beginning of the last day; your hands in other people's pockets at noon; that is the height of the last day; and the gaol, ornamented or otherwise (assuredly the great gaol of the grave), for the night. That is the history of nations under judgment. Don't think I say this to any single class; least of all specially to you; the rich are continually, now-a-days, reproaching you with your wish to be idle. It is very wrong of you; but, de

they want to work all day, themselves? All mouths are very properly open now against the Paris Communists because they fight that they may get wages for marching about with flags. What do the upper classes fight for, then? What have they fought for since the world became upper and lower, but that they also might have wages for walking about with flags, and that mischievously? It is very wrong of the Communists to steal church-plate and candlesticks. Very wrong indeed; and much good may they get of their pawnbrokers' tickets. Have you any notion (I mean that you shall have some soon), how much the fathers and fathers' fathers of these men, for a thousand years back, have paid their priests, to keep them in plate and candlesticks? You need not think I am a republican, or that I like to see priests ill-treated, and their candlesticks carried off. I have many friends among priests, and should have had more had I not long been trying to make them see that they have long trusted too much in candle-sticks, not quite enough in candles; not at all enough in the sun, and least of all enough in the sun's Maker. Scientific people indeed of late opine the sun to have been produced by collision, and to be a splendidly permanent railroad accident, or explosive Elysium: also I noticed, only yesterday, that gravitation itself is announced to the members of the Royal Institution as the result of vibratory motion. Some day, perhaps, the members of the Royal Institution will proceed to inquire after the cause of—vibratory motion. Be that as it may, the

Beginning, or Prince of Vibration, as modern science has it,—Prince of Peace, as old science had it,—continues through all scientific analysis, His own arrangements about the sun, as also about other lights, lately hidden, or burning low. And these are primarily, that He has appointed a great power to rise and set in heaven, which gives life, and warmth, and motion, to the bodies of men, and beasts, creeping things, and flowers; and which also causes light and colour in the eyes of things that have eyes. And he has set above the souls of men, on earth, a great law or Sun of Justice or Righteousness, which brings also life and health in the daily strength and spreading of it, being spoken of in the priests' language, (which they never explained to anybody, and now wonder that nobody understands,) as having "healing in its wings:" and the obedience to this law, as it gives strength to the heart, so it gives light to the eyes of souls that have got any eyes, so that they begin to see each other as lovely, and to love each other. That is the final law respecting the sun, and all manner of minor lights and candles, down to rush-lights; and I once got it fairly explained, two years ago, to an intelligent and obliging wax-and-tallow chandler at Abbeville, in whose shop I used to sit sketching in rainy days; and watching the cartloads of ornamental candles which he used to supply for the church at the far east end of the town, (I forget what saint it belongs to, but it is opposite the late Emperor's large new cavalry barracks), where the young ladies of the better class in Abbeville

had just got up a beautiful evening service, with a pyramid of candles which it took at least half-an-hour to light, and as long to put out again, and which, when lighted up to the top of the church, were only to be looked at themselves, and sung to, and not to light anybody, or anything. I got the tallow-chandler to calculate vaguely the probable cost of the candles lighted in this manner, every day, in all the churches of France ; and then I asked him how many cottagers' wives he knew round Abbeville itself who could afford, without pinching, either dip or mould in the evening to make their children's clothes by, and whether, if the pink and green bees-wax of the district were divided every afternoon among them, it might not be quite as honourable to God, and as good for the candle-trade ? Which he admitted readily enough ; but what I should have tried to convince the young ladies themselves of, at the evening service, would probably not have been admitted so readily ;—that they themselves were nothing more than an extremely graceful kind of wax-tapers which had got into their heads that they were only to be looked at, for the honour of God, and not to light anybody.

Which is indeed too much the notion of even the masculine aristocracy of Europe at this day. One can imagine them, indeed, modest in the matter of their own luminousness, and more timid of the tax on agricultural horses and carts, than of that on lucifers ; but it would be well if they were content, here in England, however dimly phosphorescent themselves, to bask in the sunshine of

May at the end of Westminster Bridge, (as my boy on Abingdon Bridge), with their backs against the large edifice they have built there, an edifice, by the way, to my own poor judgment less contributing to the adornment of London, than the new police-office to that of Abingdon. But the English squire, after his fashion, sends himself to that highly decorated gaol all spring-time ; and cannot be content with his hands in his own pockets, nor even in yours and mine ; but claps and laughs, semi-idiot that he is, at dog-fights on the floor of the House, which, if he knew it, are indeed dog-fights of the Stars in their courses, Sirius against Procyon ; and of the havock and loosed dogs of war, makes, as *The Times'* correspondent says they make, at Versailles, of the siege of Paris, "the Entertainment of the Hour."

You think that, perhaps, an unjust saying of him, as he will, assuredly himself. He would fain put an end to this wild work, if he could, he thinks.

My friends, I tell you solemnly, the sin of it all, down to this last night's doing, or undoing, (for it is Monday now, I waited before finishing my letter, to see if the Sainte Chapelle would follow the Vendôme Column ;) the sin of it, I tell you, is not that poor rabble's ; spade and pickaxe in hand among the dead ; nor yet the blasphemer's, making noise like a dog by the defiled altars of our Lady of Victories ; and round the barricades, and the ruins, of the Street of Peace.

This cruelty has been done by the kindest of us, and

the most honourable ; by the delicate women, by the nobly-nurtured men, who through their happy and, as they thought, holy lives, have sought, and still seek, only “the entertainment of the hour.” And this robbery has been taught to the hands,—this blasphemy to the lips,—of the lost poor, by the False Prophets who have taken the name of Christ in vain, and leagued themselves with his chief enemy, “Covetousness, which is idolatry.”

Covetousness, lady of Competition and of deadly Care ; idol above the altars of Ignoble Victory ; builder of streets, in cities of Ignoble Peace. I have given you the picture of her—your goddess and only Hope—as Giotto saw her ; dominant in prosperous Italy as in prosperous England, and having her hands clawed then, as now, so that she can only clutch, not work ; also you shall read next month with me what one of Giotto’s friends says of her—a rude versifier, one of the twangling harpers ; as Giotto was a poor painter for low price ; and with colours ground by hand ; but such cheap work must serve our turn for this time ; also, here, is pourtrayed for you* one of the ministering angels of the goddess ; for she herself, having ears set wide to the wind, is careful to have

* Engraved, as also the woodcut in the April number, carefully after Holbein, by my coal-waggon-assisting assistant : but he has missed his mark somewhat, here ; the imp’s abortive hands, hooked processes only, like Envy’s, and pterodactylous, are scarcely seen in their clutch of the bellows, and there are other faults. We will do it better for you, afterwards.

wind-instruments provided by her servants for other people's ears.



This servant of hers was drawn by the court portrait painter, Holbein; and was a councillor at poor-law boards, in his day; counselling then, as some of us have, since, "Bread of Affliction and Water of Affliction" for the vagrant as such,—which is, indeed, good advice, if you are quite sure the vagrant has, or may have a home; not otherwise. But we will talk further of this next month, taking into council one of Holbein's prosaic friends, as well as that singing friend of Giotto's—an English lawyer and country gentleman, living on his farm at Chelsea—(somewhere near Cheyne Row, I believe)—and not unfrequently visited there by the King of England, who would ask himself unexpectedly to dinner at the little Thames-side farm, though the floor of it was only strewn with green rushes. It was burnt at last, rushes, ricks, and all; some said because bread of affliction and water of afflic

tion had been served to heretics there, its master being a stout Catholic ; and, singularly enough, also a Communist ; so that because of the fire, and other matters, the King at last ceased to dine at Chelsea. We will have some talk, however, with the farmer, ourselves, some day soon ; meantime and always, believe me,

Faithfully yours,

JOHN RUSKIN.

POSTSCRIPT.

25th May (early morning), Reuter's final telegram, in the *Echo* of last night, being "The Louvre and the Tuileries are in flames, the Federals having set fire to them with petroleum," it is interesting to observe how in fulfilment of the Mechanical Glories of our age, its ingenious Gomorrah manufactures, and supplies, to demand, her own brimstone; achieving also a quite scientific, instead of miraculous, descent of it from Heaven; and ascent of it, where required, without any need of cleaving or quaking of earth, except in a superficially "vibratory" manner.

Nor can it be less encouraging to you to see how, with a sufficiently curative quantity of Liberty, you may defend yourselves against all danger of over-Production, especially in art; but, in case you should ever wish to re-"produce" any of the combustibles (as oil, or canvas), used in these Parisian Economies, you will do well to inquire of the author of the "Essay on Liberty," whether he considers oil of linseed, or petroleum, as best fulfilling his definition, "utilities fixed and embodied in material objects."

FORS CLAVIGERA.

LETTERS

TO THE WORKMEN AND LABOURERS OF
GREAT BRITAIN.

By JOHN RUSKIN, LL.D.

PART II.

PLATES

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FORS CLAVIGERA.

LETTER VII.

DENMARK HILL,
1st July, 1871.

MY FRIENDS,

It seldom chances, my work lying chiefly among stones, clouds, and flowers, that I am brought into any freedom of intercourse with my fellow-creatures; but since the fighting in Paris I have dined out several times, and spoken to the persons who sate next me, and to others when I went upstairs; and done the best I could to find out what people thought about the fighting, or thought they ought to think about it, or thought they ought to say. I had, of course, no hope of finding any one thinking what they ought to do. But I have not yet, a little to my surprise, met with any one who either appeared to be sadder, or professed himself wiser, for anything that has happened.

It is true that I am neither sadder nor wiser, because of it, myself. But then I was so sad before, that nothing

could make me sadder; and getting wiser has always been to me a very slow process,—(sometimes even quite stopping for whole days together),—so that if two or three new ideas fall in my way at once, it only puzzles me; and the fighting in Paris has given me more than two or three.

The newest of all these new ones, and, in fact, quite a glistering and freshly minted idea to me, is the Parisian notion of Communism, as far as I understand it, (which I don't profess to do altogether, yet, or I should be wiser than I was, with a vengeance.)

For, indeed, I am myself a Communist of the old school—reddest also of the red; and was on the very point of saying so at the end of my last letter; only the telegram about the Louvre's being on fire stopped me, because I thought the Communists of the new school, as I could not at all understand them, might not quite understand me. For we Communists of the old school think that our property belongs to everybody, and everybody's property to us; so of course I thought the Louvre belonged to me as much as to the Parisians, and expected they would have sent word over to me, being an Art Professor, to ask whether I wanted it burnt down. But no message or intimation to that effect ever reached me.

Then the next bit of new coinage in the way of notion which I have picked up in Paris streets, is the present meaning of the French word "Ouvrier," which

in my time the dictionaries used to give as "Workman," or "Working-man." For again, I have spent many days, not to say years, with the working-men of our English school myself; and I know that with the more advanced of them, the gathering word is that which I gave you at the end of my second number—"To do good work, whether we live or die." Whereas I perceive the gathering, or rather scattering, word of the French "ouvrier" is, "To *undo* good work, whether we live or die."

And this is the third, and the last I will tell you for the present, of my new ideas, but a troublesome one: namely, that we are henceforward to have a duplicate power of political economy; and that the new Parisian expression for its first principle is not to be "*laissez faire*," but "*laissez refaire*."

I cannot, however, make anything of these new French fashions of thought till I have looked at them quietly a little; so to-day I will content myself with telling you what we Communists of the old school meant by Communism; and it will be worth your hearing, for—I tell you simply in my "arrogant" way—we know, and have known, what Communism is—for our fathers knew it, and told us, three thousand years ago; while you baby Communists do not so much as know what the name means, in your own English or French—no, not so much as whether a House of Commons implies, or does not imply, also a House of Uncommons; nor whether the Holiness of the Commune, which Garibaldi came to fight

for, had any relation to the Holiness of the "Communion" which he came to fight against.

Will you be at the pains, now, however, to learn rightly, and once for all, what Communism is? First, it means that everybody must work in common, and do common or simple work for his dinner; and that if any man will not do it, he must not have his dinner. That much, perhaps, you thought you knew?—but you did not think we Communists of the old school knew it also? You shall have it, then, in the words of the Chelsea farmer and stout Catholic, I was telling you of, in last number. He was born in Milk Street, London; three hundred and ninety-one years ago (1480, a year I have just been telling my Oxford pupils to remember, for manifold reasons), and he planned a Commune flowing with milk, and honey, and otherwise Elysian; and called it the "Place of Wellbeing," or Utopia; which is a word you perhaps have occasionally used before now, like others, without understanding it;—(in the article of the *Liverpool Daily Post* before referred to, it occurs felicitously seven times). You shall use it in that stupid way no more, if I can help it. Listen how matters really are managed there.

"The chief, and almost the only business of the government,* is to take care that no man may live

* I spare you, for once, a word for "government" used by this old author, which would have been unintelligible to you, and is so, except in its general sense, to me, too.

idle, but that every one may follow his trade diligently: yet they do not wear themselves out with perpetual toil from morning to night, as if they were beasts of burden, which, as it is indeed a heavy slavery, so it is everywhere the common course of life amongst all mechanics except the Utopians: but they, dividing the day and night into twenty-four hours, appoint six of these for work, three of which are before dinner and three after; they then sup, and, at eight o'clock, counting from noon, go to bed and sleep eight hours: the rest of their time, besides that taken up in work, eating, and sleeping, is left to every man's discretion; yet they are not to abuse that interval to luxury and idleness, but must employ it in some proper exercise, according to their various inclinations, which is, for the most part, reading.

“But the time appointed for labour is to be narrowly examined, otherwise, you may imagine, that, since there are only six hours appointed for work, they may fall under a scarcity of necessary provisions: but it is so far from being true that this time is not sufficient for supplying them with plenty of all things, either necessary or convenient, that it is rather too much; and this you will easily apprehend, if you consider how great a part of all other nations is quite idle. First, women generally do little, who are the half of mankind; and, if some few women are diligent, their husbands are idle: then,—
. . . .”

What then?

We will stop a minute, friends, if you please, for I want you, before you read what then, to be once more made fully aware that this farmer who is speaking to you is one of the sternest Roman Catholics of his stern time; and, at the fall of Cardinal Wolsey, became Lord High Chancellor of England in his stead.

“—then, consider the great company of idle priests, and of those that are called religious men; add to these, all rich men, chiefly those that have estates in land, who are called noblemen and gentlemen, together with their families, made up of idle persons, that are kept more for shew than use: add to these, all those strong and lusty beggars that go about, pretending some disease in excuse for their begging; and, upon the whole account, you will find, that the number of those by whose labours mankind is supplied is much less than you, perhaps, imagined: then, consider how few of those that work are employed in labours that are of real service! for we, who measure all things by money, give rise to many trades that are both vain and superfluous, and serve only to support riot and luxury: for if those who work were employed only in such things as the conveniences of life require, there would be such an abundance of them, *that the prices of them would so sink that tradesmen could not be maintained by their gains*;”—(italics mine—Fair and softly, Sir Thomas! we must have a shop round the corner, and

a pedlar or two on fair-days, yet)—“if all those who labour about useless things were set to more profitable employments, and if all that languish out their lives in sloth and idleness (every one of whom consumes as much as any two of the men that are at work) were forced to labour, you may easily imagine that a small proportion of time would serve for doing all that is either necessary, profitable, or pleasant to mankind, especially while pleasure is kept within its due bounds: this appears very plainly in Utopia; for there, in a great city, and in all the territory that lies round it, you can scarce find five hundred, either men or women, by their age and strength capable of labour, that are not engaged in it! even the heads of government, though excused by the law, yet do not excuse themselves, but work, that, by their examples, they may excite the industry of the rest of the people.”

You see, therefore, that there is never any fear among us of the old school, of being out of work; but there is great fear, among many of us, lest we should not do the work set us well; for, indeed, we thorough-going Communists make it a part of our daily duty to consider how common we are; and how few of us have any brains or souls worth speaking of, or fit to trust to;—that being the, alas, almost unexceptionable lot of human creatures. Not that we think ourselves (still less, call ourselves without thinking so,) miserable sinners, for we are not in any wise miserable, but quite

comfortable for the most part: and we are not sinners, that we know of; but are leading godly, righteous, and sober lives, to the best of our power, since last Sunday; (on which day some of us were, we regret to be informed, drunk;) but we are of course common creatures enough, the most of us, and thankful if we may be gathered up in St. Peter's sheet, so as not to be uncivilly or unjustly called unclean too. And therefore our chief concern is to find out any among us wiser, and of better make than the rest, and to get them, if they will for any persuasion take the trouble, to rule over us, and teach us how to behave, and make the most of what little good is in us.

So much for the first law of old Communism, respecting work. Then the second respects property, and it is that the public, or common, wealth, shall be more and statelier in all its substance than private or singular wealth; that is to say (to come to my own special business for a moment) that there shall be only cheap and few pictures, if any, in the insides of houses, where nobody but the owner can see them; but costly pictures, and many, on the outsides of houses, where the people can see them: also that the Hôtel-de-Ville, or Hotel of the whole Town, for the transaction of its common business, shall be a magnificent building, much rejoiced in by the people, and with its tower seen far away through the clear air; but that the hotels for private business or pleasure, cafés, taverns, and the like, shall be

low, few, plain, and in back streets; more especially such as furnish singular and uncommon drinks and refreshments; but that the fountains which furnish the people's common drink should be very lovely and stately, and adorned with precious marbles, and the like. Then farther, according to old Communism, the private dwellings of uncommon persons—dukes and lords—are to be very simple, and roughly put together—such persons being supposed to be above all care for things that please the commonalty; but the buildings for public or common service, more especially schools, almshouses, and workhouses, are to be externally of a majestic character, as being for noble purposes and charities; and in their interiors furnished with many luxuries for the poor and sick. And finally and chiefly, it is an absolute law of old Communism that the fortunes of private persons should be small, and of little account in the State; but the common treasure of the whole nation should be of superb and precious things in redundant quantity, as pictures, statues, precious books; gold and silver vessels, preserved from ancient times; gold and silver bullion laid up for use, in case of any chance need of buying anything suddenly from foreign nations; noble horses, cattle, and sheep, on the public lands; and vast spaces of land for culture, exercise, and garden, round the cities, full of flowers, which, being everybody's property, nobody could gather; and of birds which, being everybody's property, nobody could shoot.

And, in a word, that instead of a common poverty, or national debt, which every poor person in the nation is taxed annually to fulfil his part of, there should be a common wealth, or national reverse of debt, consisting of pleasant things, which every poor person in the nation should be summoned to receive his dole of, annually; and of pretty things, which every person capable of admiration, foreigners as well as natives, should unfeignedly admire, in an æsthetic, and not a covetous manner (though for my own part, I can't understand what it is that I am taxed now to defend, or what foreign nations are supposed to covet, here.) But truly, a nation that has got anything to defend of real public interest, can usually hold it; and a fat Latin communist gave for sign of the strength of his commonalty, in its strongest time,—

“Privatus illis census erat brevis,
Commune magnum;”

which you may get any of your boys or girls to translate for you, and remember; remembering, also, that all commonalty or publicity depends for its goodness on the nature of the *thing* that is common, and that is public. When the French cried, “Vive la République!” after the battle of Sedan, they were thinking only of the Publique, in the word, and not of the Re in it. But that is the essential part of it, for that “Re” is not like the mischievous Re in Reform, and Refaire, which the words had better be without; but it is short for *res*, which

means "thing;" and when you cry, "Live the Republic," the question is mainly, what thing it is you wish to be publicly alive, and whether you are striving for a Common-Wealth, and Public-Thing; or, as too plainly in Paris, for a Common-Illth, and Public-Nothing, or even Public-Less-than-nothing and Common Deficit.

Now all these laws respecting public and private property, are accepted in the same terms by the entire body of us Communists of the old school; but with respect to the management of both, we old Reds fall into two classes, differing, not indeed in colour of redness, but in depth of tint of it—one class being, as it were, only of a delicately pink, peach-blossom, or dog-rose redness; but the other, to which I myself do partly, and desire wholly, to belong, as I told you, reddest of the red, that is to say, full crimson, or even dark crimson, passing into that deep colour of the blood, which made the Spaniards call it blue, instead of red, and which the Greeks call *φοινίκεος*, being an intense phoenix or flamingo colour: and this not merely, as in the flamingo feathers, a colour on the outside, but going through and through, ruby-wise; so that Dante, who is one of the few people who have ever beheld our queen full in the face, says of her that, if she had been in a fire, he could not have seen her at all, so fire-colour she was, all through.*

And between these two sects or shades of us, there is

* "Tanto rossa, ch' appena fora dentro al fuoco nota."—*Purg.* xxix., 122.

this difference in our way of holding our common faith (that our neighbour's property is ours, and ours his), namely, that the rose-red division of us are content in their diligence of care to preserve or guard from injury or loss their neighbour's property, as their own; so that they may be called, not merely dog-rose red, but even "watch-dog-rose" red; being, indeed, more careful and anxious for the safety of the possessions of other people, (especially their masters,) than for any of their own; and also more sorrowful for any wound or harm suffered by any creature in their sight, than for hurt to themselves. So that they are Communists, even less in their having part in all common well-being of their neighbours, than part in all common pain: being yet, on the whole, infinite gainers; for there is in this world infinitely more joy than pain to be shared, if you will only take your share when it is set for you.

The vermilion, or Tyrian-red sect of us, however, are not content merely with this carefulness and watchfulness over our neighbour's goods, but we cannot rest unless we are giving what we can spare of our own; and the more precious it is, the more we want to divide it with somebody. So that above all things, in what we value most of possessions, pleasant sights, and true knowledge, we cannot relish seeing any pretty things unless other people see them also; neither can we be content to know anything for ourselves, but must contrive, somehow, to make it known to others.

And as thus especially we like to give knowledge away ; so we like to have it good to give, (for, as for selling knowledge, thinking it comes by the spirit of Heaven, we hold the selling of it to be only a way of selling God again, and utterly Iscariot's business) ; also, we know that the knowledge made up for sale is apt to be watered and dusted, or even itself good for nothing ; and we try, for our part, to get it, and give it, pure : the mere fact that it is to be given away at once to anybody who asks to have it, and immediately wants to use it, is a continual check upon us. For instance, when Colonel North, in the House of Commons, on the 20th of last month, (as reported in the *Times*,) “ would simply observe in conclusion, that it was impossible to tell how many thousands of the young men who were to be embarked for India next September, would be marched, not to the hills, but to their graves ; ” any of us Tyrian-reds “ would simply observe ” that the young men themselves ought to be constantly, and on principle, informed of their destination before embarking ; and that this pleasant communicativeness of what knowledge on the subject was to be got, would soon render quite possible the attainment of more. So also, in abstract science, the instant habit of making true discoveries common property, cures us of a bad trick which one may notice to have much hindered scientific persons lately, of rather spending their time in hiding their neighbours' discoveries than improving their own : whereas, among us, scientific flamingoes are not only openly graced for discoveries, but openly disgraced

for coveries ; and that sharply and permanently ; so that there is rarely a hint or thought among them of each other's being wrong, but quick confession of whatever is found out rightly.*

But the point in which we dark-red Communists differ most from other people is, that we dread, above all things, getting miserly of virtue ; and if there be any in us, or among us, we try forthwith to get it made common, and would fain hear the mob crying for some of that treasure, where it seems to have accumulated. I say "seems," only : for though, at first, all the finest virtue looks as if it were laid up with the rich, (so that, generally, a millionaire would be much surprised at hearing that his daughter had made a *petroleuse* of herself, or that his son had murdered anybody for the sake of their watch and cravat),—it is not at all clear to us dark-reds that this virtue, proportionate to income, is of the right sort ; and we believe that even if it were, the people who keep it thus all to themselves, and leave the so-called *canaille* without any, vitiate what they keep by keeping it, so that it is like manna laid up through the night, which breeds worms in the morning.

You see, also, that we dark-red Communists, since we

* Confession always a little painful, however ; scientific envy being the most difficult of all to conquer. I find I did much injustice to the botanical lecturer, as well as to my friend, in my last letter ; and, indeed, suspected as much at the time ; but having some botanical notions myself, which I am vain of, I wanted the lecturer's to be wrong, and stopped cross-examining my friend as soon as I had got what suited me. Nevertheless, the general statement that follows, remember, rests on no tea-table chat ; and the tea-table chat itself is accurate, as far as it goes.

exist only in giving, must, on the contrary, hate with a perfect hatred all manner of thieving: even to Cœur-de-Lion's tar-and-feather extreme; and of all thieving, we dislike thieving on trust most (so that, if we ever get to be strong enough to do what we want, and chance to catch hold of any failed bankers, their necks will not be worth half an hour's purchase). So, also, as we think virtue diminishes in the honour and force of it in proportion to income, we think vice increases in the force and shame of it, and is worse in kings and rich people than in poor; and worse on a large scale than on a narrow one; and worse when deliberate than hasty. So that we can understand one man's coveting a piece of vineyard-ground for a garden of herbs, and stoning the master of it, (both of them being Jews);—and yet the dogs ate queen's flesh for that, and licked king's blood! but for two nations—both Christian—to covet their neighbour's vineyards, all down beside the River of their border, and slay until the River itself runs red! The little pool of Samaria!—shall all the snows of the Alps, or the salt pool of the Great Sea, wash their armour, for these?

I promised, in my last letter, that I would tell you the main meaning and bearing of the war, and its results to this day:—now that you know what Communism is, I can tell you these briefly, and what is more to the purpose, how to bear yourself in the midst of them.

The first reason for all wars, and for the necessity of national defences, is that the majority of persons, high and

low, in all European nations, are Thieves, and in their hearts, greedy of their neighbours' goods, land, and fame.

But besides being Thieves, they are also fools, and have never yet been able to understand that if Cornish men want pippins cheap, they must not ravage Devonshire—that the prosperity of their neighbours is, in the end, their own also; and the poverty of their neighbours, by the Communism of God, becomes also in the end their own. “Invidia,” jealousy of your neighbour's good, has been, since dust was first made flesh, the curse of man; and “Charitas,” the desire to do your neighbour grace, the one source of all human glory, power, and material Blessing.

But war between nations (thieves and fools though they be,) is not necessarily in all respects evil. I gave you that long extract from Froissart to show you, mainly, that Theft in its simplicity—however sharp and rude, yet if frankly done, and bravely—does not corrupt men's souls; and they can, in a foolish, but quite vital and faithful way, keep the feast of the Virgin Mary in the midst of it.

But Occult Theft, Theft which hides itself even from itself, and is legal, respectable, and cowardly, corrupts the body and soul of man, to the last fibre of them. And the guilty Thieves of Europe, the real sources of all deadly war in it, are the Capitalists—that is to say, people who live by percentages or the labour of others; instead of by fair wages for their own. The *Real* war in Europe, of which this fighting in Paris is the Inauguration, is between

these and the workman, such as these have made him. They have kept him poor, ignorant, and sinful, that they might, without his knowledge, gather for themselves the produce of his toil. At last, a dim insight into the fact of this dawns on him ; and such as they have made him, he meets them, and *will* meet.

Nay, the time is even come when he will study that Meteorological question, suggested by the *Spectator*, formerly quoted, of the Filtration of Money from above downwards.

“It was one of the many delusions of the Commune,” (says to-day’s *Telegraph*, 24th June,) “that it could do without rich consumers.” Well, such unconsumed existence would be very wonderful ! Yet it is, to me also, conceivable. Without the riches,—no ; but without the consumers ?—possibly ! It is occurring to the minds of the workmen that these Golden Fleeces must get their dew from somewhere. “Shall there be dew upon the fleece only ?” they ask :—and will be answered. They cannot do without these long purses, say you ? No ; but they want to find where the long purses are filled. Nay, even their trying to burn the Louvre, without reference to Art Professors, had a ray of meaning in it—quite Spectatorial.

“If we must choose between a Titian and a Lancashire cotton-mill,” (wrote the *Spectator* of August 6th, last year, instructing me in political economy, just as the war was beginning,) “in the name of manhood and morality, give us the cotton-mill.”

So thinks the French workman also, energetically; only *his* mill is not to be in Lancashire. Both French and English agree to have no more Titians,—it is well,—but which is to have the Cotton-Mill?

Do you see, in *The Times* of yesterday and the day before, 22nd and 23rd June, that the Minister of France dares not, even in this her utinost need, put on an income tax; and do you see why he dares not?

Observe, such a tax is the only honest and just one; because it tells on the rich in true proportion to the poor, and because it meets necessity in the shortest and bravest way, and without interfering with any commercial operation.

All rich people object to income tax, of course;—they like to pay as much as a poor man pays on their tea, sugar, and tobacco—nothing on their incomes.

Whereas, in true justice, the only honest and wholly right tax is one not merely on income, but property; increasing in percentage as the property is greater. And the main virtue of such a tax is that it makes publicly known what every man has, and how he gets it.

For every kind of Vagabonds, high and low, agree in their dislike to give an account of the way they get their living, still less, of how much they have got sewn up in their breeches. It does not, however, matter much to a country that it should know how its poor Vagabonds live; but it is of vital moment that it should know how its rich Vagabonds live; and that much of knowledge, it seems to

me, in the present state of our education, is quite attainable. But that, when you have attained it, you may act on it wisely, the first need is that you should be sure you are living honestly yourselves. That is why I told you in my second letter, you must learn to obey good laws before you seek to alter bad ones:—I will amplify now a little the three promises I want you to make. Look back at them.

I. You are to do good work, whether you live or die. It may be you will have to die;—well, men have died for their country often, yet doing her no good; be ready to die for her in doing her assured good: her, and all other countries with her. Mind your own business with your absolute heart and soul; but see that it is a good business first. That it *is* corn and sweet pease you are producing,—not gunpowder and arsenic. And be sure of this, literally:—*you must simply rather die than make any destroying mechanism or compound*. You are to be *literally* employed in cultivating the ground, or making useful things, and carrying them where they are wanted. Stand in the streets, and say to all who pass by:—Have you any vineyard we can work in,—*not* Naboth's? In your powder and petroleum manufactory, we work no more.

I have said little to you yet of any of the pictures engraved—you perhaps think, not to the ornament of my book.

Be it so. You will find them better than ornaments in time. Notice, however, in the one I give you with this letter—the “Charity” of Giotto—the Red Queen of

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LETTER VIII.

MY FRIENDS,

I BEGIN this letter a month before it is wanted,* having several matters in my mind that I would fain put into words at once. It is the first of July, and I sit down to write by the dimmallest light that ever yet I wrote by; namely, the light of this midsummer morning, in mid-England, (Matlock, Derbyshire), in the year 1871.

For the sky is covered with grey cloud;—not rain-cloud, but a dry black veil, which no ray of sunshine can pierce; partly diffused in mist, feeble mist, enough to make distant objects unintelligible, yet without any substance, or wreathing, or colour of its own. And everywhere the leaves of the trees are shaking fitfully, as they do before a thunder-storm; only not violently, but enough to show the passing to and fro of a strange, bitter, blighting wind. Dismal enough, had it been the first morning of its kind that summer had sent. But during all this spring, in London, and at Oxford, through meagre March, through changelessly sullen April, through despondent May, and darkened June, morning after morning has come grey-shrouded thus.

* I have since been ill, and cannot thoroughly revise my sheets; but my good friend Mr. Robert Chester, whose keen reading has saved me many a blunder ere now, will, I doubt not, see me safely through the pinch.

And it is a new thing to me, and a very dreadful one. I am fifty years old, and more ; and since I was five, have gleaned the best hours of my life in the sun of spring and summer mornings ; and I never saw such as these, till now.

And the scientific men are busy as ants, examining the sun, and the moon, and the seven stars, and can tell me all about *them*, I believe, by this time ; and how they move, and what they are made of.

And I do not care, for my part, two copper spangles how they move, nor what they are made of. I can't move them any other way than they go, nor make them of anything else, better than they are made. But I would care much and give much, if I could be told where this bitter wind comes from, and what *it* is made of.

For, perhaps, with forethought, and fine laboratory science, one might make it of something else.

It looks partly as if it were made of poisonous smoke ; very possibly it may be : there are at least two hundred furnace chimneys in a square of two miles on every side of me. But mere smoke would not blow to and fro in that wild way. It looks more to me as if it were made of dead men's souls—such of them as are not gone yet where they have to go, and may be flitting hither and thither, doubting, themselves, of the fittest place for them.

You know, if there *are* such things as souls, and if ever any of them haunt places where they have been

hurt, there must be many about us, just now, displeased enough!

You may laugh, if you like. I don't believe any one of you would like to live in a room with a murdered man in the cupboard, however well preserved chemically;—even with a sunflower growing out of the top of his head.

And I don't, myself, like living in a world with such a multitude of murdered men in the ground of it—though we *are* making heliotropes of them, and scientific flowers, that study the sun.

I wish the scientific men would let me and other people study it with our own eyes, and neither through telescopes nor heliotropes. You shall, at all events, study the rain a little, if not the sun, to-day, and settle that question we have been upon so long as to where it comes from.

All France, it seems, is in a state of enthusiastic delight and pride at the unexpected facility with which she has got into debt; and Monsieur Thiers is congratulated by all our wisest papers on his beautiful statesmanship of borrowing. I don't myself see the cleverness of it, having suffered a good deal from that kind of statesmanship in private persons: but I daresay it is as clever as anything else that statesmen do, now-a-days; only it happens to be more mischievous than most of their other doings, and I want you to understand the bearings of it. Everybody in France who has got any money is eager to lend it to M. Thiers at five per cent. No doubt; but

who is to pay the five per cent. ? It is to be "raised" by duties on this and that. Then certainly the persons who get the five per cent. will have to pay some part of these duties themselves, on their own tea and sugar, or whatever else is taxed; and this taxing will be on the whole of their trade, and on whatever they buy with the rest of their fortunes; * but the five per cent. only on what they lend M. Thiers.

It is a low estimate to say the payment of duties will take off one per cent. of their five.

Practically, therefore, the arrangement is that they get four per cent. for their money, and have all the trouble of customs duties, to take from them another extra one per cent., and give it them back again. Four per cent., however, is not to be despised. But who pays *that* ?

The people who have got no money to lend pay it; the

* "The charge on France for the interest of the newly-created debt, for the amount advanced by the Bank, and for the annual repayments—in short, for the whole additional burdens which the war has rendered necessary—is substantially to be met by increased Customs and Excise duties. The two principles which seem to have governed the selection of these imposts are, to extort the largest amount of money as it is leaving the hand of the purchaser, and to enforce the same process as the cash is falling into the hand of the native vendor; the results being to burden the consumer and restrict the national industry. Leading commodities of necessary use—such as sugar and coffee, all raw materials for manufacture, and all textile substances—have to pay *ad valorem* duties, in some cases ruinously heavy. Worse still, and bearing most seriously on English interests, heavy export duties are to be imposed on French products, among which wine, brandy, liqueurs, fruits, eggs, and oilcake stand conspicuous—these articles paying a fixed duty; while all others, grain and

daily worker and producer pays it. Unfortunate "William," who has borrowed, in this instance, not a plane he could make planks with, but mitrailleuses and gunpowder, with which he has planed away his own farmsteads, and forests, and fair fields of corn, and having left himself desolate, now has to pay for the loan of this useful instrument, five per cent. So says the gently commercial James

flour, we presume, included, will pay 1 per cent. *ad valorem*. Navigation dues are also to be levied on shipping, French and foreign; and the internal postage of letters is to be increased 25 per cent. From the changes in the Customs duties alone an increased revenue of £10,500,000 is anticipated. We will not venture to assert that these changes may not yield the amount of money so urgently needed; but if they do, the result will open up a new chapter in political economy. Judging from the experience of every civilised State, it is simply inconceivable that such a tariff can be productive, can possess the faculty of healthy natural increase, or can act otherwise than as a dead weight on the industrial energies of the country. Every native of France will have to pay more for articles of prime necessity, and will thus have less to spare on articles of luxury—that is, on those which contribute most to the revenue, with the least of damage to the resources of his industry. Again, the manufacturer will have the raw material of his trade enhanced in value; and, though he may have the benefit of a drawback on his exports, he will find his home market starved by State policy. His foreign customer will purchase less, because the cost is so much greater, and because his means are lessened by the increase in the prices of food through the export duty on French products. The French peasant finds his market contracted by an export duty which prevents the English consumers of his eggs, poultry, and wine from buying as largely as they once did; his profits are therefore reduced, his piece of ground is less valuable, his ability to pay taxes is lessened. The policy, in short, might almost be thought expressly devised to impoverish the entire nation when it most wants enriching—to strangle French industry by slow degrees, to dry up at their source the main currents of revenue. Our only hope is, that the proposals, by their very grossness, will defeat themselves."—*Telegraph, June 29th.*

to him: "Not only the price of your plane, but five per cent. to me for lending it, O sweetest of Williams."

Sweet William, carrying generally more absinthe in his brains than wit, has little to say for himself, having, indeed, wasted too much of his sweetness lately, tainted disagreeably with petroleum, on the desert air of Paris. And the people who are to get their five per cent. out of him, and roll him and suck him,—the sugar-cane of a William that he is,—how should they but think the arrangement a glorious one for the nation?

So there is great acclaim and triumphal procession of financiers! and the arrangement is made; namely, that all the poor labouring persons in France are to pay the rich idle ones five per cent. annually, on the sum of eighty millions of sterling pounds, until further notice.

But this is not all, observe. Sweet William is not altogether so soft in his rind that you can crush him without some sufficient machinery: you must have your army in good order, "to justify public confidence;" and you must get the expense of that, besides your five per cent., out of ambrosial William. He must pay the cost of his own roller.

Now, therefore, see briefly what it all comes to.

First, you spend eighty millions of money in fireworks, doing no end of damage in letting them off.

Then you borrow money, to pay the firework-maker's bill, from any gain-loving persons who have got it.

And then, dressing your bailiff's men in new red coats

and cocked hats, you send them drumming and trumpeting into the fields, to take the peasants by the throat, and make them pay the interest on what you have borrowed, and the expense of the cocked hats besides.

That is "financiering," my friends, as the mob of the money-makers understand it. And they understand it well. For that is what it always comes to, finally; taking the peasant by the throat. He *must* pay—for he only *can*. Food can only be got out of the ground, and all these devices of soldiership, and law, and arithmetic, are but ways of getting at last down to him, the furrow-driver, and snatching the roots from him as he digs.

And they have got him down, now, they think, well, for a while, poor William, after his fit of fury and petroleum: and can make their money out of him for years to come, in the old ways.

Did you chance, my friends, any of you, to see, the other day, the 83rd number of the *Graphic*, with the picture of the Queen's concert in it? All the fine ladies sitting so trimly, and looking so sweet, and doing the whole duty of woman—wearing their fine clothes gracefully; and the pretty singer, white-throated, warbling "Home, sweet home" to them, so morally, and melodiously! Here was yet to be our ideal of virtuous life, thought the *Graphic*! Surely, we are safe back with our virtues in satin slippers and lace veils;—and our Kingdom of Heaven is come again, *with* observation, and crown diamonds of the dazzlingest. Cherubim and Seraphim in toilettes de

Paris,—(bleu-de-ciel—vert d'olivier-de-Noé—mauve de colombe-fusillée,) dancing to Coote and Tinney's band; and vulgar Hell reserved for the canaille, as heretofore! Vulgar Hell shall be didactically pourtrayed, accordingly; (see page 15,)—Wickedness going its way to *its* poor Home—bitter-sweet. Ouvrier and petroleuse—prisoners at last—glaring wild on their way to die.

Alas, of these divided races, of whom one was appointed to teach and guide the other, which has indeed sinned deepest—the unteaching, or the untaught?—which now are guiltiest—these, who perish, or those—who forget?

Ouvrier and petroleuse; they are gone their way—to their death. But for these, the Virgin of France shall yet unfold the oriflamme above their graves, and lay her blanched lilies on their smirched dust. Yes, and for these, great Charles shall rouse his Roland, and bid him put ghostly trump to lip, and breathe a point of war; and the helmed Pucelle shall answer with a wood-note of Domrémy;—yes, and for these the Louis they mocked, like his Master, shall raise his holy hands, and pray God's peace.

“Not as the world giveth.” Everlasting shame only, and unrest, are the world's gifts. These Swine of the five per cent. shall share them duly.

La sconoscente vita, che i fe' sozzi
Ad ogni conoscenza or li fa bruni.

* * * *

Che tutto l'oro, ch'è sotto la luna,
E che già fù, di queste anime stanche
Non potrebbe farne posar una.

“Ad ogni conoscenza bruni:” Dark to all recognition! So they would have it indeed, true of instinct. “Ce serait l’inquisition,” screamed the Senate of France, threatened with income-tax and inquiry into their ways and means. Well,—what better thing could it be? Had they not been blind long enough, under their mole-hillocks, that they should shriek at the first spark of “Inquisition?” A few things might be “inquired,” one should think, and answered, among honest men, now, to advantage, and openly? “Ah no—for God’s sake,” shrieks the Senate, “no Inquisition. If ever anybody should come to know how we live, we were disgraced for ever, honest gentlemen that we are.”

Now, my friends, the first condition of all bravery is to keep out of *this* loathsomeness. If you *do* live by rapine, stand up like a man for the old law of bow and spear; but don’t fall whimpering down on your belly, like Autolycus, “grovelling on the ground,” when another human creature asks you how you get your daily bread, with an “Oh, that ever I was born,—here is inquisition come on me!”

The Inquisition must come. Into men’s consciences, no; not now: there is little worth looking into there. But into their pockets—yes; a most practicable and beneficial inquisition, to be made thoroughly and purgatorially, once for all, and rendered unnecessary hereafter, by furnishing the relieved marsupialia with—*glass* pockets, for the future.

You know, at least, that we, in our own society, are to have glass pockets, as we are all to give the tenth of what we have, to buy land with, so that we must every one know each other's property to a farthing. And this month I begin making up my own accounts for you, as I said I would: I could not, sooner, though I set matters in train as soon as my first letter was out, and effected (as I supposed!), in February, a sale of 14,000*l.* worth of houses, at the West End, to Messrs. — and —, of — Row.

But from then till now, I've been trying to get that piece of business settled, and until yesterday, 19th July, I have not been able.

For, first there was a mistake made by my lawyer in the list of the houses: No. 7 ought to have been No. 1. It was a sheer piece of stupidity, and ought to have been corrected by a dash of the pen; but all sorts of deeds had to be made out again, merely that they might be paid for; and it took about three months to change 7 into 1.

At last all was declared smooth again, and I thought I should get my money; but Messrs. ——— never stirred. My people kept sending them letters, saying I really did want the money, though they mightn't think it. Whether they thought it or not, they took no notice of any such informal communications. I thought they were going to back out of their bargain; but my man of business at last got their guarantee for its completion.

“If they've guaranteed the payment, why don't they

pay?" thought I; but still I couldn't get any money. At last I found the lawyers on both sides were quarrelling over the stamp-duties! Nobody knew, of the whole pack of them, whether this stamp or that was the right one! and my lawyers wouldn't give an eighty-pound stamp, and theirs wouldn't be content with a twenty-pound one.

Now, you know, all this stamp business itself is merely Mr. Gladstone's * way of coming in for *his* share of the booty. I can't be allowed to sell my houses in peace, but Mr. Gladstone must have his three hundred pounds out of me, to feed his Woolwich infant with, and fire it off "with the most satisfactory result," "nothing damaged but the platform."

I am content, if only he would come and say what he wants, and take it, and get out of my sight. But not to know what he *does* want! and to keep me from getting my money at all, while his lawyers are asking which is the right stamp? I think he had better be clear on that point next time.

But here, at last, are six months come and gone, and the stamp question is—not settled, indeed, but I've undertaken to keep my man of business free of harm, if the stamps won't do; and so at last he says I'm to have my money; and I really believe, by the time this letter is out, Messrs. — will have paid me my 14,000*l*.

Now you know I promised you the tenth of all I had, when free from incumbrances already existing on it.

* Of course, the Prime Minister is always the *real* tax-gatherer; the Chancellor of Exchequer is only the cat's-paw.

This first instalment of 14,000*l.* is not all clear, for I want part of it to found a Mastership of Drawing under the Art Professorship at Oxford ; which I can't do rightly for less than 5,000*l.* But I'll count the sum left as 10,000*l.* instead of 9,000*l.*, and that will be clear for our society, and so, you shall have a thousand pounds down, as the tenth of that, which will quit me, observe, of my pledge thus far.

A thousand *down*, I say ; but down where ? Where can I put it to be safe for us ? You will find presently, as others come in to help us, and we get something worth taking care of, that it becomes a very curious question indeed, where we can put our money to be safe !

In the meantime, I've told my man of business to buy 1,000*l.* consols in the names of two men of honour ; the names cannot yet be certain. What remains of the round thousand shall be kept to add to next instalment. And thus begins the fund, which I think we may advisably call the "St. George's" fund. And although the interest on consols is, as I told you before, only the taxation on the British peasant continued since the Napoleon wars, still *this* little portion of his labour, the interest on our St. George's fund, will at last be saved for him, and brought back to him.

And now, if you will read over once again the end of my fifth letter, I will tell you a little more of what we are to do with this money, as it increases.

First, let whoever gives us any, be clear in their minds that it is a Gift. It is not an Investment. It is a frank and simple gift to the British people ; nothing of it is to come back to the giver.

But also, nothing of it is to be lost. This money is not to be spent in feeding Woolwich infants with gunpowder. It is to be spent in dressing the earth and keeping it,—in feeding human lips,—in clothing human bodies,—in kindling human souls.

First of all, I say, in dressing the earth. As soon as the fund reaches any sufficient amount, the Trustees shall buy with it any kind of land offered them at just price in Britain. Rock, moor, marsh, or sea-shore—it matters not what, so it be British ground, and secured to us.

Then, we will ascertain the absolute best that can be made of every acre. We will first examine what flowers and herbs it naturally bears ; every wholesome flower that it will grow shall be sown in its wild places, and every kind of fruit-tree that can prosper ; and arable and pasture land extended by every expedient of tillage, with humble and simple cottage dwellings under faultless sanitary regulation. Whatever piece of land we begin work upon, we shall treat thoroughly at once, putting unlimited manual labour on it, until we have every foot of it under as strict care as a flower-garden : and the labourers shall be paid sufficient, unchanging wages ; and their children educated compulsorily in agricultural schools inland, and naval schools by the sea, the indispensable first condition

of such education being that the boys learn either to ride or to sail; the girls to spin, weave, and sew, and at a proper age to cook all ordinary food exquisitely; the youth of both sexes to be disciplined daily in the strictest practice of vocal music; and for morality, to be taught gentleness to all brute creatures,—finished courtesy to each other,—to speak truth with rigid care, and to obey orders with the precision of slaves. Then, as they get older, they are to learn the natural history of the place they live in,—to know Latin, boys and girls both,—and the history of five cities; Athens, Rome, Venice, Florence, and London.

Now, as I told you in my fifth letter, to what extent I may be able to carry this plan into execution, I know not; but to *some* visible extent, with my own single hand, I can, and will, if I live. Nor do I doubt but that I shall find help enough, as soon as the full action of the system is seen, and ever so little a space of rightly cultivated ground in perfect beauty, with inhabitants in peace of heart, of whom none

Doluit miserans inopem, aut invidit habenti.

Such a life we have lately been taught by vile persons to think impossible; so far from being impossible, it *has* been the actual life of all glorious human states in their origin.

*Hanc olim veteres vitam coluere Sabini;
Hanc Remus et frater; sic fortis Etruria orevit;
Scilicet et rerum facta est pulcherrima Roma.*

But, had it never been endeavoured until now, we might yet learn to hope for its unimagined good by considering what it has been possible for us to reach of unimagined evil. Utopia and its benediction are probable and simple things, compared to the Kakotopia and its curse, which we have seen actually fulfilled. We have seen the city of Paris (what miracle can be thought of beyond this?) with her own forts raining ruin on her palaces, and her young children casting fire into the streets in which they had been born, but we have not faith enough in heaven to imagine the reverse of this, or the building of any city whose streets shall be full of innocent boys and girls playing in the midst thereof.

My friends, you have trusted, in your time, too many idle words. Read now these following, not idle ones; and remember *them*; and trust them, for they are true:—

“ Oh, thou afflicted, tossed with tempest, and not comforted, behold, I will lay thy stones with fair colours, and lay thy foundations with sapphires.

“ And all thy children shall be taught of the Lord; and great shall be the peace of thy children.

“ In righteousness shalt thou be established: thou shalt be far from oppression; for thou shalt not fear: and from terror; for it shall not come near thee. . . .

“ Whosoever shall gather together against thee shall fall for thy sake. . . .

“ No weapon that is formed against thee shall prosper; and every tongue that shall rise against thee in judgment

thou shalt condemn. This is the heritage of the servants of the Lord; and their righteousness is of me, saith the Lord."

Remember only that in this now antiquated translation, "righteousness" means, accurately and simply, "justice," and is the eternal law of right, obeyed alike in the great times of each state, by Jew, Greek, and Roman. In my next letter, we will examine into the nature of this justice, and of its relation to Governments that deserve the name.

And so believe me

Faithfully yours,

JOHN RUSKIN.

LETTER IX.

DENMARK HILL,

MY FRIENDS,

1st September, 1871.

As the design which I had in view when I began these letters (and many a year before, in the germ and first outlines of it) is now fairly afoot, and in slow, but determined, beginning of realization, I will endeavour in this and the next following letter to set its main features completely before you ; though, remember, the design would certainly be a shallow and vain one, if its bearings could be either shortly explained, or quickly understood. I have much in my own hope, which I know you are as yet incapable of hoping, but which your enemies are dexterous in discouraging, and eager to discourage. Have you noticed how curiously and earnestly the greater number of public journals that have yet quoted these papers, allege, for their part, nothing but the difficulties in our way ; and that with as much contempt as they can venture to express ? No editor could say to your face that the endeavour to give you fresh air, wholesome employment, and high education, was reprehensible or dangerous. The worst he can venture to say is, that it is ridiculous,—which you observe is, by most, declared as wittily as they may.

Some must, indeed, candidly think, as well as say so

Education of any noble kind has of late been so constantly given only to the idle classes, or, at least, to those who conceive it a privilege to be idle,* that it is difficult for any person, trained in modern habits of thought, to imagine a true and refined scholarship, of which the essential foundation is to be skill in some useful labour. Time and trial will show which of the two conceptions of education is indeed the ridiculous one—and *have* shown, many and many a day before this, if any one would look at the showing. Such trial, however, I mean anew to make, with what life is left to me, and help given to me: and the manner of it is to be this, that, few or many, as our company may be, we will secure for the people of Britain as wide spaces of British ground as we can; and on such spaces of freehold land we will cause to be trained as many British children as we can, in healthy, brave, and kindly life, to every one of whom there shall be done true justice, and dealt fair opportunity of “advancement,” or what else may, indeed, be good for them.

“True justice!” I might more shortly have written “justice,” only you are all now so much in the way of

* Infinite nonsense is talked about the “work done” by the upper classes. I have done a little myself; in my day, of the kind of work they boast of; but mine, at least, has been all play. Even lawyer’s, which is, on the whole, the hardest, you may observe to be essentially grim play, made more jovial for themselves by conditions which make it somewhat dismal to other people. Here and there we have a real worker among soldiers, or no soldiering would long be possible; nevertheless young men don’t go into the Guards with any primal or essential idea of work.

asking for what you think "rights," which, if you could get them, would turn out to be the deadliest wrongs;—and you suffer so much from an external mechanism of justice, which for centuries back has abetted, or, at best, resulted in, every conceivable manner of injustice,—that I am compelled to say "*True* justice," to distinguish it from that which is commonly imagined by the populace, or attainable under the existing laws, of civilized nations.

This true justice—(not to spend time, which I am apt to be too fond of doing, in verbal definition), consists mainly in the granting to every human being due aid in the development of such faculties as it possesses for action and enjoyment; primarily, for useful action, because all enjoyment worth having (nay, all enjoyment not harmful) must in some way arise out of that, either in happy energy, or rightly complacent and exulting rest.

"Due" aid you see I have written. Not "equal" aid. One of the first statements I made to you respecting this domain of ours was "there shall be no equality in it." In education especially, true justice is curiously unequal—if you choose to give it a hard name, iniquitous. The right law of it is that you are to take most pains with the best material. Many conscientious masters will plead for the exactly contrary iniquity, and say you should take the most pains with the dullest boys. But that is not so (only you must be very careful that you know which *are* the dull boys; for the cleverest look often very like them). Never waste pains on bad ground; let it remain rough,

though properly looked after and cared for ; it will be of best service so ; but spare no labour on the good, or on what has in it the capacity of good. The tendency of modern help and care is quite morbidly and madly in reverse of this great principle. Benevolent persons are always, by preference, busy on the essentially bad ; and exhaust themselves in efforts to get maximum intellect from cretins and maximum virtue from criminals. Meantime, they take no care to ascertain (and for the most part when ascertained, obstinately refuse to remove) the continuous sources of cretinism and crime, and suffer the most splendid material in child-nature to wander neglected about the streets, until it has become rotten to the degree in which they feel prompted to take an interest in it. Now I have not the slightest intention—understand this, I beg of you, very clearly—of setting myself to mend or reform people ; when they are once out of form they may stay so, for me.* But of what unspoiled stuff I can find to my hand I will cut the best shapes there is room for ; shapes unalterable, if it may be, for ever.

* I speak in the first person, not insolently, but necessarily, being yet alone in this design : and for some time to come the responsibility of carrying it on must rest with me, nor do I ask or desire any present help, except from those who understand what I have written in the course of the last ten years, and who can trust me, therefore. But the continuance of the scheme must depend on the finding men staunch and prudent for the heads of each department of the practical work, consenting, indeed, with each other as to certain great principles of that work, but left wholly to their own judgment as to the manner and degree in which they are to be carried into effect.

“The best shapes there is room for,” since, according to the conditions round them, men’s natures must expand or remain contracted; and, yet more distinctly let me say, “the best shapes that there is *substance* for,” seeing that we must accept contentedly infinite difference in the original nature and capacity, even at their purest; which it is the first condition of right education to make manifest to all persons—most of all to the persons chiefly concerned. That other men should know their measure, is, indeed, desirable; but that they should know it themselves, is wholly necessary.

“By competitive examination of course?” Sternly, no! but under absolute prohibition of all violent and strained effort—most of all envious or anxious effort—in every exercise of body and mind; and by enforcing on every scholar’s heart, from the first to the last stage of his instruction, the irrevocable ordinance of the third *Fors Clavigera*, that his mental rank among men is fixed from the hour he was born,—that by no temporary or violent effort can he train, though he may seriously injure, the faculties he has; that by no manner of effort can he increase them; and that his best happiness is to consist in the admiration of powers by him for ever unattainable, and of arts, and deeds, by him for ever inimitable.

Some ten or twelve years ago, when I was first actively engaged in Art teaching, a young Scottish student came up to London to put himself under me, having taken many prizes (justly, with respect to the qualities looked for by

the judges) in various schools of Art. He worked under me very earnestly and patiently for some time; and I was able to praise his doings in what I thought, very high terms: nevertheless, there remained always a look of mortification on his face, after he had been praised, however unqualifiedly. At last, he could hold no longer, but one day, when I had been more than usually complimentary, turned to me with an anxious, yet not unconfident expression, and asked: "Do you think, Sir, that I shall ever draw as well as Turner?"

I paused for a second or two, being much taken aback; and then answered,* "It is far more likely you should be made Emperor of All the Russias. There is a new Emperor every fifteen or twenty years, on the average; and by strange hap, and fortunate cabal, anybody might be made Emperor. But there is only one Turner in five hundred years, and God decides, without any admission of auxiliary cabal, what piece of clay his soul is to be put in."

It was the first time that I had been brought into direct collision with the modern system of prize-giving and competition; and the mischief of it was, in the sequel, clearly shown to me, and tragically. This youth had the finest powers of mechanical execution I have ever met with, but was quite incapable of invention, or strong intellectual effort of any kind. Had he been taught early and th~~e~~ roughly to know his place, and be content with his fac-

* I do not mean that I answered in these words, but to the effect of them, at greater length.

ulty, he would have been one of the happiest and most serviceable of men. But, at the art schools, he got prize after prize for his neat handling; and having, in his restricted imagination, no power of discerning the qualities of great work, all the vanity of his nature was brought out unchecked; so that, being intensely industrious and conscientious, as well as vain, (it is a Scottish combination of character not unfrequent*), he naturally expected to become one of the greatest of men. My answer not only mortified, but angered him, and made him suspicious of me; he thought I wanted to keep his talents from being fairly displayed, and soon afterwards asked leave (he was then in my employment as well as under my teaching) to put himself under another master. I gave him leave at once, telling him, "if he found the other master no better to his mind, he might come back to me whenever he chose." The other master giving him no more hope of advancement than I did, he came back to me; I sent him into Switzerland, to draw Swiss architecture; but instead of doing what I bid him, quietly, and nothing else, he set himself, with furious industry, to draw snowy mountains and clouds, that he might show me he *could* draw like Albert Durer, or Turner;—spent his strength in agony of vain effort;—caught cold, fell into decline, and died. How many actual deaths are now

* We English are usually bad altogether in a harmonious way, and only quite insolent when we are quite good-for-nothing; the least good in us shows itself in a measure of modesty; but many Scotch natures, of fine capacity otherwise, are rendered entirely abortive by conceit.

annually caused by the strain and anxiety of competitive examination, it would startle us all if we could know: but the mischief done to the best faculties of the brain in all cases, and the miserable confusion and absurdity involved in the system itself, which offers every place, not to the man who is indeed fitted for it, but to the one who, on a given day, chances to have bodily strength enough to stand the cruellest strain, are evils infinite in their consequences, and more lamentable than many deaths.

This, then, shall be the first condition of what education it may become possible for us to give, that the strength of the youths shall never be strained; and that their best powers shall be developed in each, without competition, though they shall have to pass crucial, but not severe, examinations, attesting clearly to themselves and to other people, not the utmost they can do, but that at least they can do *some* things accurately and well: their own certainty of this being accompanied with the quite as clear, and much happier certainty, that there are many other things which they will never be able to do at all.

“The happier certainty?” Yes. A man’s happiness consists infinitely more in admiration of the faculties of others than in confidence in his own. That reverent admiration is the perfect human gift in him; all lower animals are happy and noble in the degree they can share it. A dog reverences you, a fly does not; the capacity of partly understanding a creature above him, is the dog’s

nobility. Increase such reverence in human beings, and you increase daily their happiness, peace, and dignity; take it away, and you make them wretched as well as vile. But for fifty years back modern education has devoted itself simply to the teaching of impudence; and then we complain that we can no more manage our mobs! "Look at Mr. Robert Stephenson," (we tell a boy,) "and at Mr. James Watt, and Mr. William Shakspeare! You know you are every bit as good as they; you have only to work in the same way, and you will infallibly arrive at the same eminence." Most boys believe the "you are every bit as good as they," without any painful experiment: but the better-minded ones really take the advised measures; and as, at the end of all things, there *can* be but one Mr. James Watt or Mr. William Shakspeare, the rest of the candidates for distinction, finding themselves, after all their work, still indistinct, think it must be the fault of the police, and are riotous accordingly.

To some extent it *is* the fault of the police, truly enough, considering as the police of Europe, or teachers of politeness and civic manners, its higher classes,—higher either by race or faculty. Police they are, or else are nothing: bound to keep order, both by clear teaching of the duty and delight of Respect, and, much more, by being themselves—Respectable; whether as priests, or kings, or lords, or generals, or admirals;—if they will only take care to be verily *that*, the Respect will be forthcoming, with little pains: nay, even Obedience, inconceivable to modern

free souls as it may be, we shall get again, as soon as there is anybody worth obeying, and who can keep us out of shoal water.

Not but that those two admirals and their captains have been sorely, though needfully, dealt with. It was, doubtless, not a scene of the brightest in our naval history—that *Agincourt*, entomologically, as it were, pinned to her wrong place, off Gibraltar; but in truth, it was less the captain's fault, than the ironmonger's. You need not think you can ever have seamen in iron ships; it is not in flesh and blood to be vigilant when vigilance is so slightly necessary: the best seaman born will lose his qualities, when he knows he can steam against wind and tide,* and has to handle ships so large that the care of them is necessarily divided among many persons. If you want sea-captains indeed, like Sir Richard Grenville or Lord Dundonald, you must give them small ships, and wooden ones,—nothing but oak, pine, and hemp to trust to, above or below,—and those, trustworthy.

You little know how much is implied in the two conditions of boys' education that I gave you in my last letter,—that they shall all learn either to ride or sail: nor by what constancy of law the power of highest discipline and honour is vested by Nature in the two chivalries—of the Horse and the Wave. Both are significative of the right

* "Steam has, of course, utterly extirpated seamanship," says Admiral Rous, in his letter to *The Times* (which I had, of course, not seen when I wrote this). Read the whole letter and the article on it in *The Times* of the 17th, which is entirely temperate and conclusive.

command of man over his own passions ; but they teach, farther, the strange mystery of relation that exists between his soul and the wild natural elements on the one hand, and the wild lower animals on the other. The sea-riding gave their chief strength of temper to the Athenian, Norman, Pisan, and Venetian,—masters of the arts of the world—but the gentleness of chivalry, properly so called, depends on the recognition of the order and awe of lower and loftier animal-life, first clearly taught in the myth of Chiron, and in his bringing up of Jason, *Æsculapius*, and Achilles—but most perfectly by Homer in the fable of the horses of Achilles, and the part assigned to them, in relation to the death of his friend, and in prophecy of his own. There is, perhaps, in all the *Iliad* nothing more deep in significance—there is nothing in all literature more perfect in human tenderness, and honour for the mystery of inferior life,* than the verses that describe the sorrow of the divine horses at the death of Patroclus, and the comfort given them by the greatest of the gods. You shall read Pope's translation ; it does not give you the manner of the original, but it entirely gives you the passion :—

Meantime, at distance from the scene of blood,
The pensive steeds of great Achilles stood ;
Their godlike master slain before their eyes
They wept, and shar'd in human miseries.

* The myth of Balaam ; the cause assigned for the journey of the first King of Israel from his father's house ; and the manner of the triumphal entry of the greatest King of Judah into his capital, are symbolic of the same truths ; but in a yet more strange humility.

In vain Automedon now shakes the rein,
 Now plies the lash, and soothes and threats in vain;
 Nor to the fight nor Hellespont they go,
 Restive they stood, and obstinate in woe;
 Still as a tombstone, never to be mov'd,
 On some good man or woman unprov'd
 Lays its eternal weight; or fix'd as stands
 A marble courser by the sculptor's hands,
 Placed on the hero's grave. Along their face,
 The big round drops cours'd down with silent pace,
 Conglobing on the dust. Their manes, that late
 Circled their arched necks, and wav'd in state,
 Trail'd on the dust, beneath the yoke were spread,
 And prone to earth was hung their languid head:
 Nor Jove disdain'd to cast a pitying look,
 While thus relenting to the steeds he spoke:

“Unhappy coursers of immortal strain!
 Exempt from age, and deathless now in vain!
 Did we your race on mortal man bestow,
 Only, alas! to share in mortal woe?
 For ah! what is there, of inferior birth,
 That breathes or creeps upon the dust of earth;
 What wretched creature of what wretched kind,
 Than man more weak, calamitous, and blind?
 A miserable race! But cease to mourn;
 For not by you shall Priam's son be borne
 High on the splendid car: one glorious prize
 He rashly boasts; the rest our will denies.
 Ourselves will swiftness to your nerves impart,
 Ourselves with rising spirits swell your heart.
 Automedon your rapid flight shall bear
 Safe to the navy through the storm of war. . . .”

He said; and, breathing in th' immortal horse
 Excessive spirit, urg'd them to the course;
 From their high manes they shake the dust, and bear
 The kindling chariot through the parted war.

Is not that a prettier notion of horses than you will
 get from your betting English chivalry on the Derby

day? * We will have, please heaven, some riding, not as jockeys ride, and some sailing, not as pots and kettles sail, once more on English land and sea ; and out of both, kindled yet again, the chivalry of heart of the Knight of Athens, and Eques of Rome, and Ritter of Germany, and Chevalier of France, and Cavalier of England—chivalry gentle always and lowly, among those who deserved their name of knight ; showing mercy to whom mercy was due, and honor to whom honor.

It exists yet, and out of La Mancha, too (or none of *us* could exist), whatever you may think in these days of ungentleness and Dishonour. It exists secretly, to the full, among you yourselves, and the recovery of it again would be to you as the opening of a well in the desert. You remember what I told you were the three spiritual treasures of your life—Admiration, Hope, and Love. Admiration is the Faculty of giving Honour. It is the best word we have for the various feelings of wonder, reverence, awe, and humility, which are needful for all lovely work, and which constitute the habitual temper of all noble and clear-sighted persons, as opposed to the “impudence” of base and blind ones. The Latins called this great virtue, “pudor,” of which our “impudence” is the negative ; the Greeks had a better word, “αἰδώς ;” too wide in the bearings of it for me to explain to you to-day, even if it *could* be explained before you recovered the feeling ;—which,

* Compare also, Black Auster at the Battle of the Lake, in Macaulay's *Lays of Rome*.

after being taught for fifty years that impudence is the chief duty of man, and that living in coal-holes and ash-heaps is his proudest existence, and that the methods of generation of vermin are his loftiest subject of science,—it will not be easy for *you* to do; but your children may, and you will see that it is good for them. In the history of the five cities I named, they shall learn, so far as they can understand, what has been beautifully and bravely done; and they shall know the lives of the heroes and heroines in truth and naturalness; and shall be taught to remember the greatest of them on the days of their birth and death; so that the year shall have its full calendar of reverent Memory. And, on every day, part of their morning service shall be a song in honour of the hero whose birthday it is; and part of their evening service, a song of triumph for the fair death of one whose death-day it is: and in their first learning of notes they shall be taught the great purpose of music, which is to say a thing that you mean deeply, in the strongest and clearest possible way; and they shall never be taught to sing what they don't mean. They shall be able to sing merrily when they are happy, and earnestly when they are sad; but they shall find no mirth in mockery, nor in obscenity; neither shall they waste and profane their hearts with artificial and lascivious sorrow.

Regulations which will bring about some curious changes in piano-playing, and several other things.

“Which *will* bring.” They are bold words, considering

how many schemes have failed disastrously (as your able editors gladly point out), which seemed much more plausible than this. But, as far as I know history, good designs have not failed except when they were too narrow in their final aim, and too obstinately and eagerly pushed in the beginning of them. Prosperous Fortune only grants an almost invisible slowness of success, and demands invincible patience in pursuing it. Many good men have failed in haste; more in egotism, and desire to keep everything in their own hands; and some by mistaking the signs of their times; but others, and those generally the boldest in imagination, have not failed; and their successors, true knights or monks, have bettered the fate and raised the thoughts of men for centuries; nay, for decades of centuries. And there is assuredly nothing in this purpose I lay before you, so far as it reaches hitherto, which will require either knightly courage or monkish enthusiasm to carry out. To divert a little of the large current of English charity and justice from watching disease to guarding health, and from the punishment of crime to the reward of virtue; to establish, here and there, exercise grounds instead of hospitals, and training schools instead of penitentiaries, is not, if you will slowly take it to heart, a frantic imagination. What farther hope I have of getting some honest men to serve, each in his safe and useful trade, faithfully, as a good soldier serves in his dangerous and too often, very wide of useful one, may seem for the moment, vain enough; for indeed, in the last sermon I heard out of an English

pulpit, the clergyman said it was now acknowledged to be impossible for any honest man to live by trade in England. From which the conclusion he drew was, not that the manner of trade in England should be amended, but that his hearers should be thankful they were going to heaven. It never seemed to occur to him that perhaps it might be only through amendment of their ways in trade that some of them could ever get there.

Such madness, therefore, as may be implied in this ultimate hope of seeing some honest work and traffic done in faithful fellowship, I confess to you: but what, for my own part, I am about to endeavour, is certainly within my power, if my life and health last a few years more, and the compass of it is soon definable. First,—as I told you at the beginning of these Letters—I must do my own proper work as well as I can—nothing else must come in the way of that; and for some time to come, it will be heavy, because, after carefully considering the operation of the Kensington system of art-teaching throughout the country, and watching for two years its effect on various classes of students at Oxford, I became finally convinced that it fell short of its objects in more than one vital particular: and I have, therefore, obtained permission to found a separate Mastership of Drawing in connection with the Art-Professorship at Oxford; and elementary schools will be opened in the University galleries, next October, in which the methods of teaching will be calculated to meet requirements which have not been contemplated in the Kensing

ton system. But how far what these, not new, but very ancient disciplines teach, may be by modern students, either required or endured, remains to be seen. The organization of the system of teaching, and preparation of examples, in this school, is, however, at present my chief work—no light one—and everything else must be subordinate to it.

But in my first series of lectures at Oxford, I stated, (and cannot too often or too firmly state) that no great arts were practicable by any people, unless they were living contented lives, in pure air, out of the way of unsightly objects, and emancipated from unnecessary mechanical occupation. It is simply one part of the practical work I have to do in Art-teaching, to bring, somewhere, such conditions into existence, and to show the working of them. I know also assuredly that the conditions necessary for the Arts of men, are the best for their souls and bodies; and knowing this, I do not doubt but that it may be with due pains, to some material extent, convincingly shown; and I am now ready to receive help, little or much, from any one who cares to forward the showing of it.

Sir Thomas Dyke Acland, and the Right Hon. William Cowper-Temple have consented to be the Trustees of the fund; it being distinctly understood that in that office they accept no responsibility for the conduct of the scheme, and refrain from expressing any opinion of its principles. They simply undertake the charge of the money and land given to the St. George's Fund; certify to the public that it is

spent, or treated, for the purposes of that fund, in the manner stated in my accounts of it; and, in the event of my death, hold it for such fulfilment of its purposes as they may then find possible.

But it is evidently necessary for the right working of the scheme that the Trustees should not, except only in that office, be at present concerned with, or involved in it; and that no ambiguous responsibility should fall on them. I know too much of the manner of law to hope that I can get the arrangement put into proper form before the end of the year; but I hope, at latest, on the eve of Christmas-day (the day I named first) to publish the December number of Fors with the legal terms all clear: until then, whatever sums or land I may receive will be simply paid to the Trustees, or secured in their name, for the St. George's Fund; what I may attempt afterwards will be in any case, scarcely noticeable for some time; for I shall only work with the interest of the fund; * and as I have strength and leisure:—I have little enough of the one; and am like to have little of the other, for years to come, if these drawing-schools become useful, as I hope. But what I may do myself is of small consequence. Long before it can come to any convincing result, I believe some of the gentlemen of

* Since last Fors was published I have sold some more property, which has brought me in another ten thousand to tithe; so that I have bought a second thousand consols in the names of the Trustees—and have received a pretty little gift of seven acres of woodland, in Worcestershire, for you, already—so you see there is at least a beginning.

England will have taken up the matter, and seen that, for their own sake, no less than the country's, they *must* now live on their estates, not in shooting-time only, but all the year; and be themselves farmers, or "shepherd lords," and make the field gain on the street, not the street on the field; and bid the light break into the smoke-clouds, and bear in their hands, up to those loathsome city walls, the gifts of Giotto's Charity, corn and flowers.

It is time, too, I think. Did you notice the lovely instances of chivalry, modesty, and musical taste, recorded in those letters in the *Times*, giving description of the "civilizing" influence of our progressive age on the rural district of Margate?

They are of some documentary value, and worth preserving, for several reasons; here they are:—

1.—A TRIP TO MARGATE.

To the Editor of the Times.

SIR,—On Monday last I had the misfortune of taking a trip per steamer to Margate. The sea was rough, the ship crowded, and therefore most of the Cockney excursionists prostrate with sea-sickness. On landing on Margate pier I must confess I thought that, instead of landing in an English sea-port, I had been transported by magic to a land inhabited by savages and lunatics. The scene that ensued when the unhappy passengers had to pass between the double line of a Margate mob on the pier must be seen to be believed possible in a civilized country. Shouts, yells, howls of delight greeted every pale-looking passenger, as he or she got on the pier, accompanied by a running comment of the lowest, foulest language imaginable. But the most insulted victims were a young lady, who, having had a fit of hysterics on board, had to be assisted up the steps, and a venera-

ble-looking old gentleman with a long grey beard, who, by-the-by, was not sick at all, but being crippled and very-old, feebly tottered up the slippery steps leaning on two sticks. "Here's a guy!" "Hallo! you old thief, you won't get drowned, because you know that you are to be hung," &c., and worse than that, were the greetings of that poor old man. All this while a very much silver-bestriped policeman stood calmly by, without interfering by word or deed; and myself, having several ladies to take care of, could do nothing except telling the ruffianly mob some hard words, with, of course, no other effect than to draw all the abuse on myself. This is not an exceptional exhibition of Margate ruffianism, but, as I have been told, is of daily occurrence, only varying in intensity with the roughness of the sea.

Public exposure is the only likely thing to put a stop to such ruffianism; and now it is no longer a wonder to me why so many people are ashamed of confessing that they have been to Margate.

I remain, Sir, yours obediently,

London, August 16.

C. L. S.

2.—MARGATE.

To the Editor of the Times.

SIR,—From personal experience obtained from an enforced residence at Margate, I can confirm all that your correspondent "C. L. S." states of the behaviour of the mob on the jetty; and in addition I will venture to say that in no town in England or, so far as my experience goes, on the Continent, can such utterly indecent exhibitions be daily witnessed as at Margate during bathing hours. Nothing can be more revolting to persons having the least feelings of modesty than the promiscuous mixing of the bathers; nude men dancing, swimming, or floating with women not quite nude, certainly, but with scant clothing. The machines for males and females are not kept apart, and the latter do not apparently care to keep within the awnings. The authorities post notices as to "indecent bathing," but that appears to be all they think they ought to do.

I am, Sir, yours obediently,

B.

To the Editor of the Times.

SIR,—The account of the scenes which occur at the landing of passengers at the Margate jetty, given by your correspondent to-day, is by no means overcharged. But that is nothing. The rulers of the place seem bent on doing their utmost to keep respectable people away, or, doubtless, long before this the class of visitors would have greatly improved. The sea-fronts of the town, which in the summer would be otherwise enjoyable, are abandoned to the noisy rule of the lowest kinds of itinerant mountebanks, organ-grinders, and niggers; and from early morn till long after nightfall the place is one hopeless, hideous din. There is yet another grievance. The whole of the drainage is discharged upon the rocks to the east of the harbour, considerably above low-water mark; and to the west, where much building is contemplated, drains have already been laid into the sea, and, when these new houses are built and inhabited, bathing at Margate, now its greatest attraction, must cease for ever.

Yours obediently,

Margate, August 18.

PHAROS.

I have printed these letters for several reasons. In the first place, read after them this account of the town of Margate, given in the *Encyclopædia Britannica*, in 1797: “Margate, a seaport town of Kent, on the north side of the Isle of Thanet, near the North Foreland. It is noted for shipping vast quantities of corn (most, if not all, the product of that island) for London, and has a salt-water bath at the Post-house, which has performed great cures in nervous and paralytic cases.”

Now this Isle of Thanet, please to observe, which is an elevated (200 to 400 feet) mass of chalk, separated from the rest of Kent by little rivers and marshy lands, ought to be respected by you (as Englishmen) because it was the

first bit of ground ever possessed in this greater island by your Saxon ancestors, when they came over, some six or seven hundred of them only, in three ships, and contented themselves for a while with no more territory than that white island. Also, the North Foreland, you ought, I think, to know, is taken for the terminal point of the two sides of Britain, east and south, in the first geographical account of our dwelling-place, definitely given by a learned person. But you ought, beyond all question, to know, that the cures of the nervous and paralytic cases, attributed seventy years ago to the "salt-water bath at the Post-house," were much more probably to be laid to account of the freshest and changefullest sea-air to be breathed in England, bending the rich corn over that white dry ground, and giving to sight, above the northern and eastern sweep of sea, the loveliest skies that can be seen, not in England only, but perhaps in all the world; able, at least, to challenge the fairest in Europe, to the far south of Italy.

So it was said, I doubt not rightly, by the man who of all others knew best; the once in five hundred years given painter, whose chief work, as separate from others, was the painting of skies. He knew the colours of the clouds over the sea, from the Bay of Naples to the Hebrides; and being once asked where, in Europe, were to be seen the loveliest skies, answered instantly, "In the Isle of Thanet." • Where, therefore, and in this very town of Margate, he lived, when he chose to be quit of London, and yet not to travel.

And I can myself give this much confirmatory evidence of his saying ;—that though I never stay in Thanet, the two loveliest skies I have myself ever seen (and next to Turner, I suppose few men of fifty have kept record of so many), were, one at Boulogne, and the other at Abbeville ; that is to say in precisely the correspondent French districts of corn-bearing chalk, on the other side of the channel.

“And what are pretty skies to us ? perhaps you will ask me, or what have they to do with the behaviour of that crowd on Margate Pier ?”

Well, my friends, the final result of the education I want you to give your children will be, in a few words, this. They will know what it is to see the sky. They will know what it is to breathe it. And they will know, best of all, what it is to behave under it, as in the presence of a Father who is in heaven.

Faithfully yours,

J. RUSKIN.

LETTER X.

DENMARK HILL,

7th September, 1871.

MY FRIENDS,

FOR the last two or three days, the papers have been full of articles on a speech of Lord Derby's, which, it seems, has set the public mind on considering the land question. My own mind having long ago been both set, and entirely made up, on that question, I have read neither the speech nor the articles on it ; but my eye being caught this morning, fortunately, by the words "Doomsday Book" in my *Daily Telegraph*, and presently, looking up the column, by "stalwart arms and heroic souls of free resolute Englishmen," I glanced down the space between, and found this, to me, remarkable, passage :

"The upshot is, that, looking at the question from a purely mechanical point of view, we should seek the *beau ideal* in a landowner cultivating huge farms for himself, with abundant machinery and a few well-paid labourers to manage the mechanism, or delegating the task to the smallest possible number of tenants with capital. But when we bear in mind the origin of landlordism, of our national needs, and the real interests of the great body of English tenantry, we see how advisable it is to retain intelligent yeomen as part of our means of cultivating the soil."

This is all, then, is it, that your liberal paper ventures to say for you? It is *advisable* to retain a *few* intelligent yeomen in the island. I don't mean to find fault with the *Daily Telegraph* : I think it always means well on the

whole, and deals fairly ; which is more than can be said for its highly toned and delicately perfumed opponent, the *Pall Mall Gazette*. But I think a "Liberal" paper might have said more for the "stalwart arms and heroic souls" than this. I am going myself to say a great deal more for them, though I am not a Liberal—quite the polar contrary of that.

You, perhaps, have been provoked, in the course of these letters, by not being able to make out *what* I was. It is time you should know, and I will tell you plainly. I am, and my father was before me, a violent Tory of the old school ; (Walter Scott's school, that is to say, and Homer's,) I name these two out of the numberless great Tory writers, because they were my own two masters. I had Walter Scott's novels and the *Iliad*, (Pope's translation,) for my only reading when I was a child, on week-days : on Sundays their effect was tempered by *Robinson Crusoe* and the *Pilgrim's Progress* ; my mother having it deeply in her heart to make an evangelical clergyman of me. Fortunately, I had an aunt more evangelical than my mother ; and my aunt gave me cold muttu for Sunday's dinner, which—as I much preferred it hot—greatly diminished the influence of the *Pilgrim's Progress*, and the end of the matter was, that I got all the noble imaginative teaching of Defoe and Bunyan, and yet—am not an evangelical clergyman.

I had, however, still better teaching than theirs, and that compulsorily, and every day of the week. (Have patience

with me in this egotism, it is necessary for many reasons that you should know what influences have brought me into the temper in which I write to you.)

Walter Scott and Pope's Homer were reading of my own election, but my mother forced me, by steady daily toil, to learn long chapters of the Bible by heart; as well as to read it every syllable through, aloud, hard names and all, from Genesis to the Apocalypse, about once a year; and to that discipline—patient, accurate, and resolute—I owe, not only a knowledge of the book, which I find occasionally serviceable, but much of my general power of taking pains, and the best part of my taste in literature. From Walter Scott's novels I might easily, as I grew older, have fallen to other people's novels; and Pope might, perhaps, have led me to take Johnson's English, or Gibbon's, as types of language; but, once knowing the 32nd of Deuteronomy, the 119th Psalm, the 15th of 1st Corinthians, the Sermon on the Mount, and most of the Apocalypse, every syllable by heart, and having always a way of thinking with myself what words meant, it was not possible for me, even in the foolishlest times of youth, to write entirely superficial or formal English, and the affectation of trying to write like Hooker and George Herbert was the most innocent I could have fallen into.

From my own masters, then, Scott and Homer, I learned the Toryism which my best after-thought has only served to confirm.

That is to say a most sincere love of kings, and dislike

of everybody who attempted to disobey them. Only, both by Homer and Scott, I was taught strange ideas about kings, which I find, for the present, much obsolete; for, I perceived that both the author of the *Iliad* and the author of *Waverley* made their kings, or king-loving persons, do harder work than anybody else. Tydides or Idomeneus always killed twenty Trojans to other people's one, and Redgauntlet speared more salmon than any of the Solway fishermen, and—which was particularly a subject of admiration to me,—I observed that they not only did more, but in proportion to their doings, got less, than other people—nay, that the best of them were even ready to govern for nothing, and let their followers divide any quantity of spoil or profit. Of late it has seemed to me that the idea of a king has become exactly the contrary of this, and that it has been supposed the duty of superior persons generally to do less, and to get more than anybody else; so that it was, perhaps, quite as well that in those early days my contemplation of existent kingship was a very distant one, and my childish eyes wholly unacquainted with the splendour of courts.

The aunt who gave me cold mutton on Sundays was my father's sister: she lived at Bridge-end, in the town of Perth, and had a garden full of gooseberry-bushes, sloping down to the Tay, with a door opening to the water, which ran past it clear-brown over the pebbles three or four feet deep; an infinite thing for a child to look down into.

My father began business as a wine-merchant, with no capital, and a considerable amount of debts bequeathed him by my grandfather. He accepted the bequest, and paid them all before he began to lay by anything for himself, for which his best friends called him a fool, and I, without expressing any opinion as to his wisdom, which I knew in such matters to be at least equal to mine, have written on the granite slab over his grave that he was "an entirely honest merchant." As days went on he was able to take a house in Hunter Street, Brunswick Square, No. 54 (the windows of it, fortunately for me, commanded a view of a marvellous iron post, out of which the water-carts were filled through beautiful little trap-doors, by pipes like boa-constrictors; and I was never weary of contemplating that mystery, and the delicious dripping consequent); and as years went on, and I came to be four or five years old, he could command a post-chaise and pair for two months in the summer, by help of which, with my mother and me, he went the round of his country customers (who liked to see the principal of the house his own traveller); so that, at a jog-trot pace, and through the panoramic opening of the four windows of a post-chaise, made more panoramic still to me because my seat was a little bracket in front, (for we used to hire the chaise regularly for the two months out of Long Acre, and so could have it bracketed and pocketed as we liked), I saw all the highroads, and most of the cross ones, of England and Wales, and great part of lowland Scotland, as far as

Perth, where every other year we spent the whole summer; and I used to read the *Abbot* at Kinross and the *Monastery* in Glen Farg, which I confused with "Glen-dearg," and thought that the White Lady had as certainly lived by the streamlet in that glen of the Ochils, as the Queen of Scots in the island of Loch Leven.

It happened also, which was the real cause of the bias of my after life, that my father had a rare love of pictures. I use the word "rare" advisedly, having never met with another instance of so innate a faculty for the discernment of true art, up to the point possible without actual practice. Accordingly, wherever there was a gallery to be seen, we stopped at the nearest town for the night; and in reverentest manner I thus saw nearly all the noblemen's houses in England; not indeed myself at that age caring for the pictures, but much for castles and ruins, feeling more and more, as I grew older, the healthy delight of uncovetous admiration, and perceiving, as soon as I could perceive any political truth at all, that it was probably much happier to live in a small house, and have Warwick Castle to be astonished at, than to live in Warwick Castle, and have nothing to be astonished at; but that, at all events, it would not make Brunswick Square in the least more pleasantly habitable, to pull Warwick Castle down. And, at this day, though I have kind invitations enough to visit America, I could not, even for a couple of months, live in a country so miserable as to possess no castles.

Nevertheless, having formed my notion of kinghood chiefly from the FitzJames of the *Lady of the Lake*, and of noblesse from the Douglas there, and the Douglas in *Marmion*, a painful wonder soon arose in my child-mind, why the castles should now be always empty. Tantallon was there; but no Archibald of Angus:—Stirling, but no Knight of Snowdown. The galleries and gardens of England were beautiful to see—but his Lordship and her Ladyship were always in town, said the housekeepers and gardeners. Deep yearning took hold of me for a kind of “Restoration,” which I began slowly to feel that Charles the Second had not altogether effected, though I always wore a gilded oak-apple very reverently in my button-hole on the 29th of May. It seemed to me that Charles the Second’s Restoration had been, as compared with the Restoration I wanted, much as that gilded oak-apple to a real apple. And as I grew older, the desire for red pippins instead of brown ones, and Living Kings instead of dead ones, appeared to me rational as well as romantic; and gradually it has become the main purpose of my life to grow pippins, and its chief hope, to see Kings.

Hope, this last, for others much more than for myself. I can always behave as if I had a King, whether I have one or not; but it is otherwise with some unfortunate persons. Nothing has ever impressed me so much with the power of kingship, and the need of it, as the declamation of the French Republicans against the Emperor before his fall.

He did not, indeed, meet my old Tory notion of a

King; and in my own business of architecture he was doing, I saw, nothing but mischief; pulling down lovely buildings, and putting up frightful ones carved all over with L. N.'s: but the intense need of France for a governor of some kind was made chiefly evident to me by the way the Republicans confessed themselves paralyzed by him. Nothing could be done in France, it seemed, because of the Emperor; they could not drive an honest trade; they could not keep their houses in order; they could not study the sun and moon; they could not eat a comfortable *déjeuner à la fourchette*; they could not sail in the Gulf of Lyons, nor climb on the Mont d'Or; they could not, in fine, (so they said), so much as walk straight, nor speak plain, because of the Emperor. On this side of the water, moreover, the Republicans were all in the same tale. Their opinions, it appeared, were not printed to their minds in the Paris journals, and the world must come to an end therefore. So that, in fact, here was all the Republican force of France and England, confessing itself paralyzed, not so much by a real King, as by the shadow of one. All the harm the extant and visible King did was, to encourage the dressmakers and stone-masons in Paris,—to pay some idle people very large salaries,—and to make some, perhaps agreeably talkative, people, hold their tongues. That, I repeat, was all the harm he did, or could do; he corrupted nothing but what was voluntarily corruptible,—crushed nothing but what was essentially not solid: and it remained open to these Republican gentlemen to do any-

thing they chose that was useful to France, or honourable to themselves, between earth or heaven, except only—print violent abuse of this shortish man with a long nose, who stood, as they would have it, between them and heaven. But there they stood, spell-bound; the one thing suggesting itself to their frantic impotence as feasible, being to get this one shortish man assassinated. Their children would not grow, their corn would not ripen, and the stars would not roll, till they had got this one short man blown into shorter pieces.

If the shadow of a King can thus hold (how many?) millions of men, by their own confession, helpless for terror of it, what power must there be in the substance of one?

But this mass of republicans—vociferous, terrified, and mischievous, is the least part, as it is the vilest, of the great European populace who are lost for want of true kings. It is not these who stand idle, gibbering at a shadow, whom we have to mourn over;—they would have been good for little, even governed;—but those who work and do *not* gibber,—the quiet peasants in the fields of Europe, sad-browed, honest-hearted, full of natural tenderness and courtesy, who have none to help them, and none to teach; who have no kings, except those who rob them while they live, no tutors, except those who teach them—how to die.

I had an impatient remonstrance sent me the other day, by a country clergyman's wife, against that saying in my former letter, "Dying has been more expensive to

you than living." Did I know, she asked, what a country clergyman's life was, and that he was the poor man's only friend.

Alas, I know it, and too well. What can be said of more deadly and ghastly blame against the clergy of England, or any other country, than that they are the poor man's only friends?

Have they, then, so betrayed their Master's charge and mind, in their preaching to the rich;—so smoothed their words, and so sold their authority,—that, after twelve hundred years entrusting of the gospel to them, there is no man in England (this is their chief plea for themselves forsooth) who will have mercy on the poor, but they; and so they must leave the word of God, and serve tables?

I would not myself have said so much against English clergymen, whether of country or town. Three—and one dead makes four—of my dear friends (and I have not many dear friends) are country clergymen; and I know the ways of every sort of them; my architectural tastes necessarily bringing me into near relations with the sort who like pointed arches and painted glass; and my old religious breeding having given me an unconquerable habit of taking up with any travelling tinker of evangelical principles I may come across; and even of reading, not without awe, the prophetic warnings of any persons belonging to that peculiarly well-informed "persuasion," such, for instance, as those of Mr. Zion Ward "concerning the fall of Lucifer, in a letter to a friend," Mr. William

Dick, of Glasgow, price twopence," in which I read (as aforesaid, with unfeigned feelings of concern,) that "the slair: of the Lord shall be MAN-Y; that is, man, in whom death is, with all the works of carnality, shall be burnt up!"

But I was not thinking either of English clergy, or of any other group of clergy, specially, when I wrote that sentence; but of the entire Clerkly or Learned Company, from the first priest of Egypt to the last ordained Belgravian curate, and of all the talk they have talked, and all the quarrelling they have caused, and all the gold they have had given them, to this day, when still, "they are the poor man's only friends"—and by no means all of them that, heartily! though I see the Bishop of Manchester has of late been superintending—I beg his pardon, Bishops don't superintend—looking on, or over, I should have said,—the recreations of his flock at the sea-side; and "the thought struck him" that railroads were an advantage to them in taking them for their holiday out of Manchester. The thought may, perhaps, strike him, next, that a working man ought to be able to find "holy days" *in* his home, as well as out of it.*

A year or two ago, a man who had at the time, and has still, important official authority over much of the business of the country, was speaking anxiously to me of the misery increasing in the suburbs and back streets of Lon-

* See § 159, (written seven years ago,) in *Munera Pulveris*.

don, and debating, with the good help of the Oxford Regius Professor of Medicine—who was second in council—what sanitary or moral remedy could be found. The debate languished, however, because of the strong conviction in the minds of all three of us that the misery was inevitable in the suburbs of so vast a city. At last, either the minister or physician, I forget which, expressed the conviction. “Well,” I answered, “then you must not have large cities.” “That,” answered the minister, “is an unpractical saying—you know we *must* have them, under existing circumstances.”

I made no reply, feeling that it was vain to assure any man actively concerned in modern parliamentary business, that no measures were “practical” except those which touched the source of the evil opposed. All systems of government—all efforts of benevolence, are vain to repress the natural consequences of radical error. But any man of influence who had the sense and courage to refuse himself and his family one London season—to stay on his estate, and employ the shopkeepers in his own village, instead of those in Bond Street—would be “practically” dealing with, and conquering, this evil, so far as in him lay; and contributing with his whole might to the thorough and final conquest of it.

Not but that I know how to meet it directly also, if any London landlords choose so to attack it. You are beginning to hear something of what Miss Hill has done in Marylebone, and of the change brought about by her

energy and good sense in the centre of one of the worst districts of London. It is difficult enough, I admit, to find a woman of average sense and tenderness enough to be able for such work; but there are, indeed, other such in the world, only three-fourths of them now get lost in pious lecturing, or altar-cloth sewing; and the wisest remaining fourth stay at home as quiet house-wives, not seeing their way to wider action: nevertheless, any London landlord who will content himself with moderate and fixed rent (I get five per cent. from Miss Hill, which is surely enough!), assuring his tenants of secure possession if that is paid, so that they need not fear having their rent raised, if they improve their houses; and who will secure also a quiet bit of ground for their children to play in, instead of the street,—has established all the necessary conditions of success; and I doubt not that Miss Hill herself could find co-workers able to extend the system of management she has originated, and shown to be so effective.

But the best that can be done in this way will be useless ultimately, unless the deep source of the misery be cut off. While Miss Hill, with intense effort and noble power, has partially moralized a couple of acres in Marylebone, at least fifty square miles of lovely country have been Demoralized outside London, by the increasing itch of the upper classes to live where they can get some gossip in their idleness, and show each other their dresses.

That life of theirs must come to an end soon, both here and in Paris, but to what end, it is, I trust, in their own

power still to decide. If they resolve to maintain to the last the present system of spending the rent taken from the rural districts in the dissipation of the capitals, they will not always find they can secure a quiet time, as the other day in Dublin, by withdrawing the police, nor that park-railings are the only things which (police being duly withdrawn) will go down. Those favourite castle battlements of mine, their internal "police" withdrawn, will go down also; and I should be sorry to see it;—the lords and ladies, houseless at least in shooting season, perhaps sorer, though they *did* find the grey turrets dismal in winter time. If they would yet have them for autumn, they must have them for winter. Consider, fair lords and ladies, by the time you marry, and choose your dwelling-places, there are for you but forty or fifty winters more, in whose dark days you may see the snow fall and wreath. There will be no snow in Heaven, I presume—still less elsewhere (if lords and ladies ever miss of Heaven).

And that some may, is perhaps conceivable, for there are more than a few things to be managed on an English estate, and to be "faithful" in those few cannot be interpreted as merely abstracting the rent of them. Nay, even the *Telegraph's* bean ideal of the landowner, from a mechanical point of view, may come short, somewhat. "Cultivating huge farms for himself with abundant machinery;—" Is that Lord Derby's ideal also, may it be asked? The Scott-reading of my youth haunts me, and I seem still listening to the (perhaps a little too long) speeches of the

Black Countess who appears terrifically through the sliding panel in *Peveril of the Peak*, about "her sainted Derby." Would Saint Derby's ideal, or his Black Countess's, of due ordinance for their castle and estate of Man, have been a minimum of Man therein, and an abundance of machinery? In fact, only the Trinacrian Legs of Man, transposed into many spokes of wheels—no use for "stalwart arms" any more—and less than none for inconveniently "heroic" souls?

"Cultivating huge farms for himself!" I don't even see, after the sincerest efforts to put myself into a mechanical point of view, how it is to be done. For himself? Is he to eat the cornricks then? Surely such a beau ideal is more Utopian than any of mine? Indeed, whether it be praise- or blame-worthy, it is not so easy to cultivate anything wholly for oneself, nor to consume, oneself, the products of cultivation. I have, indeed, before now, hinted to you that perhaps the "consumer" was not so necessary a person economically, as has been supposed; nevertheless, it is not in his own mere eating and drinking, or even his picture-collecting, that a false lord injures the poor. It is in his bidding and forbidding—or worse still, in ceasing to do either. I have given you another of Giotto's pictures, this month, his imagination of Injustice, which he had seen done in his time, as we in ours; and I am sorry to observe that his Injustice lives in a battlemented castle, and in a mountain country, it appears; the gate of it between rocks, and in the midst of a wood; but in Giotto's

time, woods were too many, and towns too few. Also, Injustice has indeed very ugly talons to his fingers, like Envy; and an ugly quadruple hook to his lance, and other ominous resemblances to the "hooked bird," the falcon, which both knights and ladies too much delighted in. Nevertheless Giotto's main idea about him is, clearly, that he "sits in the gate" pacifically, with a cloak thrown over his chain-armor (you can just see the links of it appear at his throat), and a plain citizen's cap for a helmet, and his sword sheathed, while all robbery and violence have way in the wild places round him,—he heedless.

Which is, indeed, the depth of Injustice: not the harm you do, but that you permit to be done,—hooking perhaps here and there something to you with your clawed weapon meanwhile. The baronial type exists still, I fear, in such manner, here and there, in spite of improving centuries.

My friends, we have been thinking, perhaps, to-day, more than we ought of our masters' faults, — scarcely enough of our own. If you would have the upper classes do *their* duty, see that you also do yours. See that you can obey good laws, and good lords, or law-wards, if you once get them—that you believe in goodness enough to know what a good law is. A good law is one that holds, whether you recognize and pronounce it or not; a bad law is one that cannot hold, however much you ordain and pronounce it. That is the mighty truth which Carlyle has been telling you for a quarter of a century—once for all

he told it you, and the land-owners, and all whom it concerns, in the third book of *Past and Present* (1845, buy Chapman and Hall's second edition, if you can, it is good print, and read it till you know it by heart), and from that day to this, whatever there is in England of dullest and insolentest may be always known by the natural instinct it has to howl against Carlyle. Of late, matters coming more and more to crisis, the liberty men, seeing their way, as they think, more and more broad and bright before them, and still this too legible and steady old sign-post saying, That it is *not* the way, lovely as it looks, the outcry against it becomes deafening. Now, I tell you once for all, Carlyle is the only living writer who has spoken the absolute and perpetual truth about yourselves and your business; and exactly in proportion to the inherent weakness of brain in your lying guides, will be their animosity against Carlyle. Your lying guides, observe, I say—not meaning that they lie wilfully—but that their nature is to do nothing else. For in the modern liberal there is a new and wonderful form of misguidance. Of old, it was bad enough that the blind should lead the blind; still, with dog and stick, or even timid walking with recognized need of dog and stick, if not to be had, such leadership might come to good end enough; but now a worse disorder has come upon you, that the squinting should lead the squinting. Now the nature of bat, or mole, or owl, may be undesirable, at least in the day-time, but worse may be imagined. The modern liberal politico-economist of the

Stuart Mill school is essentially of the type of a flat-fish—one eyeless side of him always in the mud, and one eye, on the side that *has* eyes, down in the corner of his mouth,—not a desirable guide for man or beast. There was an article—I believe it got in by mistake, but the Editor, of course, won't say so—in the *Contemporary Review*, two months back, on Mr. Morley's Essays, by a Mr. Buchanan; with an incidental page on Carlyle in it, unmatched (to the length of my poor knowledge) for obliquitous platitude, in the mud-walks of literature.

Read your Carlyle, then, with all your heart, and with the best of brain you can give; and you will learn from him first, the eternity of good law, and the need of obedience to it: then, concerning your own immediate business, you will learn farther this, that the beginning of all good law, and nearly the end of it, is in these two ordinances,—That every man shall do good work for his bread; and secondly, That every man shall have good bread for his work. But the first of these is the only one you have to think of. If you are resolved that the work shall be good, the bread will be sure; if not,—believe me, there is neither steam plough nor steam mill, go they never so glibly, that will win it from the earth long, either for you, or the Ideal Landed Proprietor.

Faithfully yours,

J. RUSKIN.

LETTER XI.

DENMARK HILL,

MY FRIENDS,

15th October, 1871.

A DAY seldom passes, now that people begin to notice these letters a little, without my receiving a remonstrance on the absurdity of writing "so much above the level" of those whom I address.

I have said, however, that eventually you shall understand, if you care to understand, every word in these pages. Through all this year I have only been putting questions ; some of them such as have puzzled the wisest, and which may, for a long time yet, prove too hard for you and me : but, next year, I will go over all the ground again, answering the questions, where I know of any answers ; or making them plain for your examination, when I know of none.

But, in the meantime, be it admitted, for argument's sake, that this way of writing, which is easy to me, and which most educated persons can easily understand, *is* very much above your level. I want to know why it is assumed so quietly that your brains must always be at a low level ? Is it essential to the doing of the work by which England exists, that its workmen should not be able to understand scholar's English (remember, I only

assume mine to be so for argument's sake), but only newspaper's English? I chanced, indeed, to take up a number of *Belgravia* the other day, which contained a violent attack on an old enemy of mine—*Blackwood's Magazine*—and I enjoyed the attack mightily, until *Belgravia* declared, by way of coup-de-grace to *Blackwood*, that something which *Blackwood* had spoken of as settled in one way had been irrevocably settled the other way,—“settled,” said triumphant *Belgravia*, “in seventy-two newspapers.”

Seventy-two newspapers, then, it seems—or, with a margin, eighty-two,—perhaps, to be perfectly safe, we had better say ninety-two—are enough to settle anything in this England of ours, for the present. But, irrevocably, I doubt. If, perchance, you workmen should reach the level of understanding scholar's English instead of newspaper's English, things might a little unsettle themselves again; and, in the end, might even get into positions un contemplated by the ninety-two newspapers,—contemplated only by the laws of Heaven, and settled by them, some time since, as positions which, if things ever got out of, they would need to get into again.

And, for my own part, I cannot at all understand why well-educated people should still so habitually speak of you as beneath their level, and needing to be written down to, with condescending simplicity, as flat-foreheaded creatures of another race, unredeemable by any Darwinism.

I was waiting last Saturday afternoon on the platform

of the railway station at Furness Abbey ; (the station itself is tastefully placed so that you can see it, and nothing else but it, through the east window of the Abbot's Chapel over the ruined altar ;) and a party of the workmen employed on another line, wanted for the swiftly progressive neighbourhood of Dalton, were taking Sabbatical refreshment at the tavern recently established at the south side of the said Abbot's Chapel. Presently, the train whistling for them, they came out in a highly refreshed state, and made for it as fast as they could by the tunnel under the line, taking very long steps to keep their balance in the direction of motion, and securing themselves, laterally, by hustling the wall or any chance passengers. They were dressed universally in brown rags, which, perhaps, they felt to be the comfortablest kind of dress ; they had, most of them, pipes, which I really believe to be more enjoyable than cigars ; they got themselves adjusted in their carriages by the aid of snatches of vocal music, and looked at us—(I had charge of a lady and her two young daughters),—with supreme indifference, as indeed at creatures of another race ; pitiable, perhaps,—certainly disagreeable and objectionable—but, on the whole, despicable, and not to be minded. We, on our part, had the insolence to pity them for being dressed in rags, and for being packed so close in the third-class carriages : the two young girls bore being run against patiently ; and when a thin boy of fourteen or fifteen, the most drunk of the company, was sent back staggering to the tavern for a forgotten pickaxe, we would,

any of us, I am sure, have gone and fetched it for him, if he had asked us. For we were all in a very virtuous and charitable temper: we had had an excellent dinner at the new inn, and had earned that portion of our daily bread by admiring the Abbey all the morning. So we pitied the poor workmen doubly—first, for being so wicked as to get drunk at four in the afternoon; and secondly, for being employed in work so disgraceful as throwing up clods of earth into an embankment, instead of spending the day, like us, in admiring the Abbey: and I, who am always making myself a nuisance to people with my political economy, inquired timidly of my friend whether she thought it all quite right. And she said, certainly not; but what could be done? It was of no use trying to make such men admire the Abbey, or to keep them from getting drunk. They wouldn't do the one, and they would do the other—they were quite an unmanageable sort of people, and had been so for generations.

Which, indeed, I knew to be partly the truth, but it only made the thing seem to me more wrong than it did before, since here were not only the actual two or three dozen of unmanageable persons, with much taste for beer, and none for architecture: but these implied the existence of many unmanageable persons before and after them,—nay, a long ancestral and filial unmanageableness. They were a Fallen Race, every way incapable, as I acutely felt, of appreciating the beauty of *Modern Painters*, or fathoming the significance of *Fors Clavigera*.

But what they had done to deserve their fall, or what I had done to deserve the privilege of being the author of those valuable books, remained obscure to me; and indeed, whatever the deservings may have been on either side, in this and other cases of the kind, it is always a marvel to me that the arrangement and its consequences are accepted so patiently. For observe what, in brief terms, the arrangement is. Virtually, the entire business of the world turns on the clear necessity of getting on table, hot or cold, if possible, meat—but, at least, vegetables,—at some hour of the day, for all of us: for you labourers, we will say at noon; for us æsthetical persons, we will say at eight in the evening; for we like to have done our eight hours' work of admiring abbeys before we dine. But, at some time of day, the mutton and turnips, or, since mutton itself is only a transformed state of turnips, we may say, as sufficiently typical of everything, turnips only, must absolutely be got for us both. And nearly every problem of State policy and economy, as at present understood, and practised, consists in some device for persuading you labourers to go and dig up dinner for us reflective and æsthetical persons, who like to sit still, and think, or admire. So that when we get to the bottom of the matter, we find the inhabitants of this earth broadly divided into two great masses;—the peasant paymasters—spade in hand, original and imperial producers of turnips; and, waiting on them all round, a crowd of polite persons, modestly expectant of turnips, for some—too often theo-

retical—service. There is, first, the clerical person, whom the peasant pays in turnips for giving him moral advice; then the legal person, whom the peasant pays in turnips for telling him, in black letters, that his house is his own; there is, thirdly, the courtly person, whom the peasant pays in turnips for presenting a celestial appearance to him; there is, fourthly, the literary person, whom the peasant pays in turnips for talking daintily to him; and there is, lastly, the military person, whom the peasant pays in turnips for standing, with a cocked hat on, in the middle of the field, and exercising a moral influence upon the neighbours. Nor is the peasant to be pitied if these arrangements are all faithfully carried out. If he really gets moral advice from his moral adviser; if his house is, indeed, maintained to be his own, by his legal adviser; if courtly persons, indeed, present a celestial appearance to him; and literary persons, indeed, talk beautiful words: if, finally, his scarecrow do, indeed, stand quiet, as with a stick through the middle of it, producing, if not always a wholesome terror, at least a picturesque effect, and colour-contrast of scarlet with green,—they are all of them worth their daily turnips. But if, perchance, it happen that he get *immoral* advice from his moralist, or if his lawyer advise him that his house is *not* his own; and his bard, story-teller, or other literary charmer, begin to charm him unwisely, not with beautiful words, but with obscene and ugly words—and he be readier with his response in vegetable produce for these than for any other sort;—finally,

if his quiet scarecrow become disquiet, and seem likely to bring upon him a whole flight of scarecrows out of his neighbours' fields,—the combined fleets of Russia, Prussia, &c., as my friend and your trustee, Mr. Cowper-Temple, has it, (see above, Letter II., p. 21,) it is time to look into such arrangements under their several heads.

Well looked after, however, all these arrangements have their advantages, and a certain basis of reason and propriety. But there are two other arrangements which have no basis on either, and which are very widely adopted, nevertheless, among mankind, to their great misery.

I must expand a little the type of my primitive peasant before defining these. You observe, I have not named among the polite persons giving theoretical service in exchange for vegetable diet, the large, and lately become exceedingly polite, class, of artists. For a true artist is only a beautiful development of tailor or carpenter. As the peasant provides the dinner, so the artist provides the clothes and house: in the tailoring and tapestry producing function, the best of artists ought to be the peasant's wife herself, when properly emulative of Queens Penelope, Bertha, and Maude; and in the house producing-and-painting function, though concluding itself in such painted chambers as those of the Vatican, the artist is still typically and essentially a carpenter or mason; first carving wood and stone, then painting the same for preservation;—if ornamentally, all the better. And, accordingly, you see these letters of mine are addressed to the "workmen and

labourers" of England, that is to say, to the providers of houses and dinners, for themselves, and for all men, in this country, as in all others.

Considering these two sorts of Providers, then, as one great class, surrounded by the suppliant persons for whom, together with themselves, they have to make provision, it is evident that they both have need originally of two things—land, and tools. Clay to be subdued; and plough, or potter's wheel, wherewith to subdue it.

Now, as aforesaid, so long as the polite surrounding personages are content to offer their salutary advice, their legal information, &c., to the peasant, for what these articles are verily worth in vegetable produce, all is perfectly fair; but if any of the polite persons contrive to get hold of the peasant's land, or of his tools, and put him into the "position of William," and make him pay annual interest, first for the wood that he planes, and then for the plane he planes it with!—my friends, polite or otherwise, these two arrangements cannot be considered as settled yet, even by the ninety-two newspapers, with all Belgravia to back them.

Not by the newspapers, nor by Belgravia, nor even by the Cambridge Catechism, or the Cambridge Professor of Political Economy.

Look to the beginning of the second chapter in the last edition of Professor Fawcett's *Manual of Political Economy*, (Macmillan, 1869, p. 105). The chapter purports to treat of the "Classes among whom wealth is distributed." And thus it begins:—

We have described the requisites of production to be three: land, labour, and capital. Since, therefore, land, labour, and capital are essential to the production of wealth, it is natural to suppose that the wealth which is produced ought to be possessed by those who own the land, labour, and capital which have respectively contributed to its production. The share of wealth which is thus allotted to the possessor of the land is termed rent; the portion allotted to the labourer is termed wages, and the remuneration of the capitalist is termed profit.

You observe that in this very meritoriously clear sentence both the possessor of the land and the possessor of the capital are assumed to be absolutely idle persons. If they contributed any labour to the business, and so confused themselves with the labourer, the problem of triple division would become complicated directly;—in point of fact, they do occasionally employ themselves somewhat, and become deserving, therefore, of a share, not of rent only, nor of profit only, but of wages also. And every now and then, as I noted in my last letter, there is an outburst of admiration in some one of the ninety-two newspapers, at the amount of “work” done by persons of the superior classes; respecting which, however, you remember that I also advised you that a great deal of it was only a form of competitive play. In the main, therefore, the statement of the Cambridge Professor may be admitted to be correct as to the existing facts; the Holders of land and capital being virtually in a state of Dignified Repose, as the Labourer is in a state of—(at least, I hear it always so announced in the ninety-two newspapers)—Dignified Labour.

But Professor Fawcett's sentence, though, as I have just said, in comparison with most writings on the subject, meritoriously clear, yet is not as clear as it might be,—still less as scientific as it might be. It is, indeed, gracefully ornamental, in the use, in its last clause, of the three words "share," "portion," and "remuneration," for the same thing; but this is not the clearest imaginable language. The sentence, strictly put, should run thus:—"The portion of wealth which is thus allotted to the possessor of the land is termed rent; the portion allotted to the labourer is termed wages; and the portion allotted to the capitalist is termed profit."

And you may at once see the advantage of reducing the sentence to these more simple terms; for Professor Fawcett's ornamental language has this danger in it, that "Remuneration," being so much grander a word than "Portion," in the very roll of it seems to imply rather a thousand pounds a day than three-and-sixpence. And until there be scientific reason shown for anticipating the portions to be thus disproportioned, we have no right to suggest their being so, by ornamental variety of language.

Again, Professor Fawcett's sentence is, I said, not entirely scientific. He founds the entire principle of allotment on the phrase "it is natural to suppose." But I never heard of any other science founded on what it was natural to suppose. Do the Cambridge mathematicians, then, in these advanced days, tell their pupils that it is natural to suppose the three angles of a triangle are equal

to two right ones? Nay, in the present case, I regret to say it has sometimes been thought wholly *unnatural* to suppose any such thing; and so exceedingly unnatural, that to receive either a "remuneration," or a "portion," or a "share," for the loan of anything, without personally working, was held by Dante and other such simple persons in the middle ages to be one of the worst of the sins that could be committed *against* nature: and the receivers of such interest were put in the same circle of Hell with the people of Sodom and Gomorrah.

And it is greatly to be apprehended that if ever our workmen, under the influences of Mr. Scott and Mr. Street, come indeed to admire the Abbot's Chapel at Furness more than the railroad station, they may become possessed of a taste for Gothic opinions as well as Gothic arches, and think it "natural to suppose" that a workman's tools should be his own property.

Which I, myself, having been always given to Gothic opinions, do indeed suppose, very strongly; and intend to try with all my might to bring about that arrangement wherever I have any influence;—the arrangement itself being feasible enough, if we can only begin by not leaving our pickaxes behind us after taking Sabbatical refreshment.

But let me again, and yet again warn you, that only by beginning so,—that is to say, by doing what is in your own power to achieve of plain right,—can you ever bring about any of your wishes; or, indeed, can you, to any practical

purpose, begin to wish. Only by quiet and decent exaltation of your own habits can you qualify yourselves to discern what is just, or to define even what is possible. I hear you are, at last, beginning to draw up your wishes in a definite manner; (I challenged you to do so, in *Time and Tide*, four years ago, in vain), and you mean to have them at last "represented in Parliament:" but I hear of small question yet among you, whether they be just wishes, and can be represented to the power of everlasting Justice, as things not only natural to be supposed, but necessary to be done. For *she* accepts no representation of things in beautiful language, but takes her own view of them, with her own eyes.

I did, indeed, cut out a slip from the *Birmingham Morning News*, last September (12th), containing a letter written by a gentleman signing himself "Justice" in person, and professing himself an engineer, who talked very grandly about the "individual and social laws of our nature:" but *he* had arrived at the inconvenient conclusions that "no individual has a natural right to hold property in land," and that "all land sooner or later must become public property." I call this an inconvenient conclusion, because I really think you would find yourselves greatly inconvenienced if your wives couldn't go into the garden to cut a cabbage, without getting leave from the Lord Mayor and Corporation; and if the same principle is to be carried out as regards tools, I beg to state to Mr. Justice-in-Person, that if anybody and everybody is to use my

own particular palette and brushes, I resign my office of Professor of Fine Art. Perhaps, when we become really acquainted with the true Justice in Person, not professing herself an engineer, she may suggest to us, as a Natural Supposition:—"That land should be given to those who can use *it*, and tools to those who can use *them*;" and I have a notion you will find this a very tenable supposition also.

I have given you, this month, the last of the pictures I want you to see from Padua;—Giotto's Image of Justice, which, as you observe, differs somewhat from the Image of Justice we used to set up in England, above insurance offices, and the like. Bandaged close about the eyes, our English Justice was wont to be, with a pair of grocers' scales in her hand, wherewith, doubtless, she was accustomed to weigh out accurately their shares to the landlords, and portions to the labourers, and remunerations to the capitalists. But Giotto's Justice has no bandage about her eyes, (Albert Durer's has them *round* open, and flames flashing from them), and weighs, not with scales, but with her own hands; and weighs, not merely the shares or remunerations of men, but the worth of them; and finding them worth this or that, gives them what they deserve—death, or honour. Those are her forms of "Remuneration."

Are you sure that you are ready to accept the decrees of this true goddess, and to be chastised or rewarded by her, as is your due, being seen through and through to your

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all the robins shot, to wear in their hats, and the bird-stuffers are exporting the few remaining to America.

This merry round person was a Tyrolese peasant; and I hold it an entirely practical proceeding, since I find my ideal of felicity actually produced in the Tyrol, to set about the production of it, here, on Tyrolese principles; which, you will find, on inquiry, have not hitherto implied the employment of steam, nor submission to the great Universal Law of Supply and Demand, nor even Demand for the local Supply of a "Liberal" government. But they do imply labour of all hands on pure earth and in fresh air. They do imply obedience to government which endeavours to be just, and faith in a religion which endeavours to be moral. And they result in strength of limbs, clearness of throats, roundness of waists, and pretty jackets, and still prettier corsets, to fit them.

I must pass, disjointedly, to matters which, in a written letter, would have been in a postscript; but I do not care, in a printed one, to leave a useless gap in the type. First, the reference in p. 70 of last number to the works of Mr. Zion Ward, is incorrect. The passage I quoted is not in the "Letter to a Friend," price twopence, but in the "Origin of Evil Discovered," price fourpence. (John Bolton, Steel-house Lane, Birmingham.) And, by the way, I wish that booksellers would save themselves, and me, some (now steadily enlarging) trouble, by noting that the price of these Letters to friends of mine, as supplied by me, the original inditer, to all and sundry, through my

only shopman, Mr. Allen, is sevenpence per epistle, and not fivepence halfpenny; and that the trade profit on the sale of them is intended to be, and must eventually be, as I intended, a quite honestly confessed profit, charged to the customer, not compressed out of the author; which object may be easily achieved by the retail bookseller, if he will resolutely charge the symmetrical sum of Tenpence per epistle over his counter, as it is my purpose he should. But to return to Mr. Ward; the correction of my reference was sent me by one of his disciples, in a very earnest and courteous letter, written chiefly to complain that my quotation totally misrepresented Mr. Ward's opinions. I regret that it should have done so, but gave the quotation neither to represent nor misrepresent Mr. Ward's opinions; but to show, which the sentence, though brief, quite sufficiently shows, that he had no right to have any.

I have before noted to you, indeed, that, in a broad sense, *nobody* has a right to have opinions; but only knows: and, in a practical and large sense, nobody has a right even to make experiments, but only to act in a way which they certainly know will be productive of good. And this I ask you to observe again, because I begin now to receive some earnest inquiries respecting the plan I have in hand, the inquirers very naturally assuming it to be an "experiment," which may possibly be successful, and much more possibly may fail. But it is not an experiment at all. It will be merely the carrying out of what has been done already in some places, to the best of my narrow power, in

other places: and so far as it can be carried, it *must* be productive of some kind of good.

For example; I have round me here at Denmark Hill seven acres of leasehold ground. I pay 50*l.* a-year ground rent, and 250*l.* a-year in wages to my gardeners; besides expenses in fuel for hot-houses, and the like. And for this sum of three hundred odd pounds a-year I have some pease and strawberries in summer; some camellias and azaleas in winter; and good cream, and a quiet place to walk in, all the year round. Of the strawberries, cream, and pease, I eat more than is good for me; sometimes, of course, obliging my friends with a superfluous pottle or pint. The camellias and azaleas stand in the anteroom of my library; and everybody says, when they come in, "how pretty:" and my young lady friends have leave to gather what they like to put in their hair, when they are going to balls. Meantime, outside of my fenced seven acres—owing to the operation of the great universal law of supply and demand—numbers of people are starving; many more, dying of too much gin; and many of their children dying of too little milk: and, as I told you in my first Letter, for my own part, I won't stand this sort of thing any longer.

Now it is evidently open to me to say to my gardeners, "I want no more azaleas or camellias; and no more strawberries and pease than are good for me. Make these seven acres everywhere as productive of good corn, vegetables, or milk, as you can; I will have no steam used upon them,

for nobody on my ground shall be blown to pieces; nor any fuel wasted in making plants blossom in winter, for I believe we shall, without such unseasonable blossoms, enjoy the spring twice as much as now; but, in any part of the ground that is not good for eatable vegetables, you are to sow such wild flowers as it seems to like, and you are to keep all trim and orderly. The produce of the land, after I have had my limited and salutary portion of pease, shall be your own; but if you sell any of it, part of the price you get for it shall be deducted from your wages.

Now observe, there would be no experiment whatever in any one feature of this proceeding. My gardeners might be stimulated to some extra exertion by it; but in any event, I should retain exactly the same command over them that I had before. I might save something out of my 250% of wages, but I should pay no more than I do now, and in return for the gift of the produce, I should certainly be able to exact compliance from my people with any such capricious fancies of mine as that they should wear velvet jackets, or send their children to learn to sing; and, indeed, I could grind them, generally, under the iron heel of Despotism, as the ninety-two newspapers would declare, to an extent unheard of before in this free country. And, assuredly, some children would get milk, strawberries, and wild flowers who do not get them now; and my young lady friends would still, I am firm in my belief, look pretty enough at their balls, even without the camellias or azaleas.

I am not going to do this with my seven acres here; first, because they are only leasehold; secondly, because they are too near London for wild flowers to grow brightly in. But I have bought, instead, twice as many freehold acres, where wild flowers are growing now, and shall continue to grow; and there I mean to live: and, with the tenth part of my available fortune, I will buy other bits of freehold land, and employ gardeners on them in this above-stated manner. I may as well tell you at once that my tithe will be, roughly, about seven thousand pounds altogether, (a little less rather than more). If I get no help, I can show what I mean, even with this; but if any one cares to help me with gifts of either money or land, they will find that what they give is applied honestly, and does a perfectly definite service: they might, for aught I know, do more good with it in other ways; but *some* good in this way—and that is all I assert—they will do, certainly, and not experimentally. And the longer they take to think of the matter the better I shall like it, for my work at Oxford is more than enough for me just now, and I shall not practically bestir myself in this land-scheme for a year to come, at least; nor then, except as a rest from my main business: but the money and land will always be safe in the hands of your trustees for you, and you need not doubt, though I show no petulant haste about the matter, that I remain,

Faithfully yours,

J. RUSKIN.

LETTER XII.

DENMARK HILL,

MY FRIENDS,

23d December, 1871.

You will scarcely care to read anything I have to say to you this evening—having much to think of, wholly pleasant, as I hope ; and prospect of delightful days to come, next week. At least, however, you will be glad to know that I have really made you the Christmas gift I promised—7,000*l.* consols, in all, clear ; a fair tithe of what I had : and to as much perpetuity as the law will allow me. It will not allow the dead to have their own way, long, whatever license it grants the living in their humours ; and this seems to me unkind to those helpless ones ;—very certainly it is inexpedient for the survivors. For the wisest men are wise to the full in death ; and if you would give them, instead of stately tombs, only so much honour as to do their will, when they themselves can no more contend for it, you would find it a good memorial of them, such as the best of them would desire, and full of blessing to all men for all time.

English law needs mending in many respects ; in none more than in this. As it stands, I can only vest my gift in trustees, desiring them, in the case of my death, immediately to appoint their own successors, and in such continued succession, to apply the proceeds of the St. George's Fund to the purchase of land in England and Scotland,

which shall be cultivated to the utmost attainable fruitfulness and beauty by the labour of man and beast thereon, such men and beasts receiving at the same time the best education attainable by the trustees for labouring creatures, according to the terms stated in this book, "Fors Clavigera."

These terms, and the arrangement of the whole matter, will become clearer to you as you read on with me, and cannot be clear at all, till you do ;—here is the money, at any rate, to help you, one day, to make merry with : only, if you care to give me any thanks, will you pause now for a moment from your merrymaking, to tell me,—to whom, as Fortune has ordered it, no merrymaking is possible at this time, (nor, indeed, much at any time ;)—to me, therefore, standing as it were astonished in the midst of this gaiety of yours, will you tell—what it is all about ?

Your little children would answer, doubtless, fearlessly, "Because the Child Christ was born to-day ;" but you, wiser than your children, it may be,—at least, it should be,—are you also sure that He was ?

And if He was, what is that to you ?

I repeat, are you indeed *sure* He was ? I mean, with real happening of the strange things you have been told, that the Heavens opened near Him, showing their hosts, and that one of their stars stood still over His head ? You are sure of that, you say ? I am glad ; and wish it were so with me ; but I have been so puzzled lately by many matters that once seemed clear to me, that I seldom now feel sure of anything. Still seldomer, however, do I feel

sure of the contrary of anything. That people say they saw it, may not prove that it was visible ; but that I never saw it cannot prove that it was invisible : and this is a story which I more envy the people who believe, on the weakest grounds, than who deny, on the strongest. The people whom I envy not at all are those who imagine they believe it, and do not.

For one of two things this story of the Nativity *is* certainly, and without any manner of doubt. It relates either a fact full of power, or a dream full of meaning. It is, at the least, not a cunningly devised fable, but the record of an impression made, by some strange spiritual cause, on the minds of the human race, at the most critical period of their existence ; — an impression which has produced, in past ages, the greatest effect on mankind ever yet achieved by an intellectual conception ; and which is yet to guide, by the determination of its truth or falsehood, the absolute destiny of ages to come.

Will you give some little time, therefore, to think of it with me to-day, being, as you tell me, sure of its truth ? What, then, let me ask you, is its truth to *you* ? The Child for whose birth you are rejoicing was born, you are told, to save His people from their sins ; but I have never noticed that you were particularly conscious of any sins to be saved from. If I were to tax you with any one in particular—lying, or thieving, or the like—my belief is you would say directly I had no business to do anything of the kind.

Nay, but, you may perhaps answer me—"That is because we *have* been saved from our sins; and we are making merrý, because we are so perfectly good."

Well; there would be some reason in such an answer. There is much goodness in you to be thankful for: far more than you know, or have learned to trust. Still, I don't believe you will tell me seriously that you eat your pudding and go to your pantomimes only to express your satisfaction that you are so very good.

What is, or may be, this Nativity, to you, then, I repeat? Shall we consider, a little, what, at all events, it was to the people of its time; and so make ourselves more clear as to what it might be to us? We will read slowly.

"And there were, in that country, shepherds, staying out in the field, keeping watch over their flocks by night."

Watching night and day, that means; not going home. The staying out in the field is the translation of a word from which a Greek nymph has her name, Agraúlos, "the stayer out in fields," of whom I shall have something to tell you, soon.

"And behold, the Messenger of the Lord stood above them, and the glory of the Lord lightened round them, and they feared a great fear."

"Messenger." You must remember that, when this was written, the word "angel" had only the effect of our word—"messenger"—on men's minds. Our translators say "angel" when they like, and "messenger" when they like; but the Bible, messenger only, or angel only, as you

please. For instance, "Was not Rahab the harlot justified by works, when she had received the angels, and sent them forth another way?"

Would not you fain know what this angel looked like? I have always grievously wanted, from childhood upwards, to know that; and gleaned diligently every word written by people who said they had seen angels: but none of them ever tell me what their eyes are like, or hair, or even what dress they have on. We dress them, in pictures, conjecturally, in long robes, falling gracefully; but we only continue to think that kind of dress angelic, because religious young girls, in their modesty, and wish to look only human, give their dresses flounces. When I was a child, I used to be satisfied by hearing that angels had always two wings, and sometimes six; but now nothing dissatisfies me so much as hearing that; for my business compels me continually into close drawing of wings; and now they never give me the notion of anything but a swift or a gannet. And, worse still, when I see a picture of an angel, I know positively where he got his wings from—not at all from any heavenly vision, but from the worshipped hawk and ibis, down through Assyrian flying bulls, and Greek flying horses, and Byzantine flying evangelists, till we get a brass eagle, (of all creatures in the world, to choose!) to have the gospel of peace read from the back of it.

Therefore, do the best I can, no idea of an angel is possible to me. And when I ask my religious friends,

they tell me not to wish to be wise above that which is written. My religious friends, let me write a few words of this letter, not to my poor puzzled workmen, but to you, who will all be going serenely to church to-morrow. This messenger, formed as we know not, stood above the shepherds, and the glory of the Lord lightened round them.

You would have liked to have seen it, you think! Brighter than the sun; perhaps twenty-one coloured, instead of seven-coloured, and as bright as the lime-light: doubtless you would have liked to see it, at midnight, in Judæa.

You tell me not to be wise above that which is written; why, therefore, should you be desirous, above that which is given? You cannot see the glory of God as bright as the lime-light at midnight; but you may see it as bright as the sun, at eight in the morning; if you choose. You might, at least, forty Christmases since: but not now.

You know I must antedate my letters for special days. I am actually writing this sentence on the second December, at ten in the morning, with the feeblest possible gleam of sun on my paper; and for the last three weeks the days have been one long drift of ragged gloom, with only sometimes five minutes' gleam of the glory of God, between the gusts, which no one regarded.

I am taking the name of God in vain, you think? No, my religious friends, not I. For completed forty years, I have been striving to consider the blue heavens, the work of His fingers, and the moon and the stars which He hath

ordained ; but you have left me nothing now to consider here at Denmark Hill, but these black heavens, the work of your fingers, and the blotting of moon and stars which you have ordained ; you,—taking the name of God in vain every Sunday, and His work and His mercy in vain all the week through.

“You have nothing to do with it—you are very sorry for it—and Baron Liebig says that the power of England is coal?”

You have everything to do with it. Were you not told to come out and be separate from all evil ? You take whatever advantage you can of the evil work and gain of this world, and yet expect the people you share with, to be damned, out of your way, in the next. If you would begin by putting them out of your way here, you would perhaps carry some of them with you there. But return to your night vision, and explain to me, if not what the angel was like, at least what you understand him to have said,—he, and those with him. With his own lips he told the shepherds there was born a Saviour for them ; but more was to be told ; “And suddenly there was with him a multitude of the heavenly host.”

People generally think that this verse means only that after one angel had spoken, there came more to sing, in the manner of a chorus ; but it means far another thing than that. If you look back to Genesis you find creation summed thus :—“So the heavens and earth were finished, and all the host of them.” Whatever living powers of any

order, great or small, were to inhabit either, are included in the word. The host of earth includes the ants and the worms of it; the host of heaven includes,—we know not what;—how should we?—the creatures that are in the stars which we cannot count,—in the space which we cannot imagine; some of them so little and so low that they can become flying poursuivants to this grain of sand we live on; others having missions, doubtless, to larger grains of sand, and wiser creatures on them.

But the vision of their multitude means at least this; that all the powers of the outer world which have any concern with ours became in some way visible now: having interest—they, in the praise,—as all the hosts of earth in the life, of this Child, born in David's town. And their hymn was of peace to the lowest of the two hosts—peace on earth;—and praise in the highest of the two hosts; and, better than peace, and sweeter than praise, Love, among men.

The men in question, ambitious of praising God after the manner of the hosts of heaven, have written something which they suppose this Song of Peace to have been like; and sing it themselves, in state, after successful battles. But you hear it, those of you who go to church in orthodox quarters, every Sunday; and will understand the terms of it better by recollecting that the Lordship, which you begin the *Te Deum* by ascribing to God, is this, over all creatures, or over the two Hosts. In the Apocalypse it is

“Lord, All governing”—Pantocrator—which we weakly translate “Almighty”; but the Americans still understand the original sense, and apply it so to their god, the dollar, praying that the will may be done of their Father which is in Earth. Farther on in the hymn, the word “Sabaoth” again means all “hosts” or creatures; and it is an important word for workmen to recollect, because the saying of St. James is coming true, and that fast, that the cries of the reapers whose wages have been kept back by fraud, have entered into the ears of the Lord of Sabaoth; that is to say, Lord of all creatures, as much of the men at St. Catherine’s Docks as of St. Catherine herself, though they live only under Tower-Hill, and she lived close under Sinai.

You see, farther, I have written above, not “good will towards men,” but “love among men.” It is nearer right so; but the word is not easy to translate at all. What it means precisely, you may conjecture best from its use at Christ’s baptism—“This is my beloved Son, in whom I am *well-pleased*.” For, in precisely the same words, the angels say, there is to be “well-pleasing in men.”

Now, my religious friends, I continually hear you talk of acting for God’s glory, and giving God praise. Might you not, for the present, think less of praising, and more of pleasing him? He can, perhaps, dispense with your praise; your opinions of His character, even when they come to be held by a large body of the religious press, are not of material importance to Him. He has the hosts of

heaven to praise Him, who see more of His ways, it is likely, than you ; but you hear that you may be pleasing to Him, if you try :—that He expected, then, to have some satisfaction in you ; and might have even great satisfaction—well-pleasing, as in His own Son, if you tried. The sparrows and the robins, if you give them leave to nest as they choose about your garden, will have their own opinions about your garden ; some of them will think it well laid out,—others ill. You are not solicitous about their opinions ; but you like them to love each other ; to build their nests without stealing each other's sticks, and to trust you to take care of them.

Perhaps, in like manner, if in this garden of the world, you would leave off telling its Master your opinions of him, and, much more, your quarrelling about your opinions of him ; but would simply trust him, and mind your own business modestly, he might have more satisfaction in you than he has had yet these eighteen hundred and seventy-one years, or than he seems likely to have in the eighteen hundred and seventy-second. For first, instead of behaving like sparrows and robins, you want to behave like those birds you read the Gospel from the backs of,—eagles. Now the Lord of the garden made the claws of eagles for them, and your fingers for you ; and if you would do the work of fingers, with the fingers he made, would, without doubt, have satisfaction in you. But, instead of fingers, you want to have claws—not mere short claws, at the finger-ends, as Giotto's Injustice has them ; but long claws that

will reach leagues away ; so you set to work to make yourselves manifold claws—far-scratching ;—and this smoke, which hides the sun and chokes the sky—this Egyptian darkness that may be felt,—manufactured by you, singular modern children of Israel, that you may have *no* light in your dwellings, is none the fairer, because cast forth by the furnaces in which you forge your weapons of war.

A very singular children of Isral ! Your Father, Abraham, indeed, once saw the smoke of a country go up as the smoke of a furnace ; but not with envy of the country.

Your English power is coal ? Well ; also the power of the Vale of Siddim was in slime,—petroleum of the best ; yet the Kings of the five cities fell there ; and the end was no well-pleasing of God among men.

Emmanuel ! God with us !—how often, you tenderly-minded Christians, have you desired to see this great sight,—this Babe lying in a manger ? Yet, you have so contrived it, once more, this year, for many a farm in France, that if He were born again, in that neighbourhood, there would be found no manger for Him to lie in ; only ashes of mangers. Our clergy and lawyers dispute, indeed, whether He may not be yet among us ; if not in mangers, in the straw of them, or the corn. An English lawyer spoke twenty-six hours but the other day—the other four days, I mean—before the Lords of her Majesty's most Honourable Privy Council, to prove that an English clergyman had used a proper quantity of equivocation in his statement that Christ was in Bread. Yet there is no harm in any.

body thinking that He is in Bread,—or even in Flour! The harm is, in their expectation of His Presence in gun-powder.

Present, however, you believe He was, that night, in flesh, to any one who might be warned to go and see Him. The inn was quite full; but we do not hear that any traveller chanced to look into the cow-house; and most likely, even if they had, none of them would have been much interested in the workman's young wife, lying there. They probably would have thought of the Madonna, with Mr. John Stuart Mill, (*Principles of Political Economy*, octavo, Parker, 1848, Vol. ii. page 321), that there was scarcely "any means open to her of gaining a livelihood, except as a wife and mother;" and that "women who prefer that occupation might justifiably adopt it—but, that there should be no option, no other carrière possible, for the great majority of women, except in the humbler departments of life, is one of those social injustices which call loudest for remedy."

The poor girl of Nazareth had less option than most; and with her weak "be it unto me as Thou wilt," fell so far below the modern type of independent womanhood, that one cannot wonder at any degree of contempt felt for her by British Protestants. Some few people, nevertheless, were meant, at the time, to think otherwise of her. And now, my working friends, I would ask you to read with me, carefully, for however often you may have read this before, I know there are points in the story which you have not thought of.

The shepherds were told that their Saviour was that day born to them "in David's village." We are apt to think that this was told, as of special interest to them, because David was a King.

Not so. It was told them because David was in youth *not* a King; but a Shepherd like themselves. "To you, shepherds, is born this day a Saviour in the shepherd's town;" that would be the deep sound of the message in their ears. For the great interest to them in the story of David himself must have been always, not that he had saved the monarchy, or subdued Syria, or written Psalms, but that he had kept sheep in those very fields they were watching in; and that his grandmother* Ruth had gone gleaning, hard by.

And they said hastily, "Let us go and see."

Will you note carefully that they only think of *seeing*, not of worshipping. Even when they do see the Child, it is not said that they worshipped. They were simple people, and had not much faculty of worship; even though the heavens had opened for them, and the hosts of heaven had sung. They had been at first only frightened; then curious, and communicative to the by-standers: they do not think even of making any offering, which would have been a natural thought enough, as it was to the first of shepherds: but they brought no firstlings of their flock—(it is only in pictures, and those chiefly painted for the

* Great;—father's father's mother.

sake of the picturesque, that the shepherds are seen bringing lambs, and baskets of eggs.) It is not said here that they brought anything, but they looked, and talked, and went away praising God, as simple people,—yet taking nothing to heart; only the mother did that.

They went away:—"returned," it is said,—to their business, and never seem to have left it again. Which is strange, if you think of it. It is a good business, truly, and one much to be commended, not only in itself, but as having great chances of "advancement"—as in the case of Jethro the Midianite's Jew shepherd; and the herdsman of Tekoa; besides that keeper of the few sheep in the wilderness, when his brethren were under arms afield. But why are they not seeking for some advancement now, after opening of the heavens to them? or, at least, why not called to it afterwards, being, one would have thought, as fit for ministry under a shepherd king, as fishermen, or custom-takers?

Can it be that the work is itself the best that can be done by simple men; that the shepherd Lord Clifford, or Michael of the Green-head ghyll, are ministering better in the wilderness than any lords or commoners are likely to do in Parliament, or other apostleship; so that even the professed Fishers of Men are wise in calling themselves Pastors rather than Piscators? Yet it seems not less strange that one never hears of any of these shepherds any more. The boy who made the pictures in this book for you could only fancy the Nativity, yet left his sheep,

that he might preach of it, in his way, all his life. But they, who saw it, went back to their sheep.

Some days later, another kind of persons came. On that first day, the simplest people of his own land;—twelve days after, the wisest people of other lands, far away: persons who had received, what you are all so exceedingly desirous to receive, a good education; the result of which, to you,—according to Mr. John Stuart Mill, in the page of the chapter on the probable future of the labouring classes, opposite to that from which I have just quoted his opinions about the Madonna's line of life—will be as follows:—“From this increase of intelligence, several effects may be confidently anticipated. First: that they will become even less willing than at present to be led, and governed, and directed into the way they should go, by the mere authority and prestige of superiors. If they have not now, still less will they have hereafter, any deferential awe, or religious principle of obedience, holding them in mental subjection to a class above them.”

It is curious that, in this old story of the Nativity, the greater wisdom of these educated persons appears to have produced upon them an effect exactly contrary to that which you hear Mr. Stuart Mill would have “confidently anticipated.” The uneducated people came only to see, but these highly trained ones to worship; and they have allowed themselves to be led, and governed, and directed into the way which they should go, (and that a long one,) by the mere authority and prestige of a superior person.

whom they clearly recognize as a born king, though not of their people. "Tell us, where is he that is born King of the Jews, for we have come to worship him."

You may perhaps, however, think that these Magi had received a different kind of education from that which Mr. Mill would recommend, or even the book which I observe is the favourite of the Chancellor of the Exchequer—"Cassell's Educator." It is possible; for they were looked on in their own country as themselves the best sort of Educators which the Cassell of their day could provide, even for Kings. And as you are so much interested in education, you will, perhaps, have patience with me while I translate for you a wise Greek's account of the education of the princes of Persia; account given three hundred years, and more, before these Magi came to Bethlehem.

"When the boy is seven years old he has to go and learn all about horses, and is taught by the masters of horsemanship, and begins to go against wild beasts; and when he is fourteen years old, they give him the masters whom they call the Kingly Child-Guiders: and these are four, chosen the best out of all the Persians who are then in the prime of life—to wit, the most wise man they can find, and the most just, and the most temperate, and the most brave; of whom the first, the wisest, teaches the prince the magic of Zoroaster; and that magic is the service of the Gods; also, he teaches him the duties that belong to a king. Then the second, the justest, teaches him to speak truth all his life through. Then the third,

the most temperate, teaches him not to be conquered by even so much as a single one of the pleasures, that he may be exercised in freedom, and verily a king, master of all things within himself, not slave to them. And the fourth, the bravest, teaches him to be dreadless of all things, as knowing that whenever he fears, he is a slave."

Three hundred and some odd years before that carpenter, with his tired wife, asked for room in the inn, and found none, these words had been written, my enlightened friends; and much longer than that, these things had been done. And the three hundred and odd years (more than from Elizabeth's time till now) passed by, and much fine philosophy was talked in the interval, and many fine things found out: but it seems that when God wanted tutors for his little Prince,—at least, persons who would have been tutors to any other little prince, but could only worship this one,—He could find nothing better than those quaint-minded masters of the old Persian school. And since then, six times over, three hundred years have gone by, and we have had a good deal of theology talked in them;—not a little popular preaching administered; sundry Academies of studious persons assembled,—Paduan, Parisian, Oxonian, and the like; persons of erroneous views carefully collected and burnt; Eton, and other grammars, diligently digested; and the most exquisite and indubitable physical science obtained,—able, there is now no doubt, to distinguish gases of every sort, and explain the reasons of their smell. And here we are, at last, finding

it still necessary to treat ourselves by Cassell's *Educator*,—patent filter of human faculty. Pass yourselves through that, my intelligent working friends, and see how clear you will come out on the other side.

Have a moment's patience yet with me, first, while I note for you one or two of the ways of that older tutorship. Four masters, you see, there were for the Persian Prince. One had no other business than to teach him to speak truth; so difficult a matter the Persians thought it. *We* know better,—we. You heard how perfectly the French gazettes did it last year, without any tutor, by their Holy Republican instincts. Then the second tutor had to teach the Prince to be free. That tutor both the French and you have had for some time back; but the Persian and Parisian dialects are not similar in their use of the word "freedom;" of that hereafter. Then another master has to teach the Prince to fear nothing; him, I admit, you want little teaching from, for your modern Republicans fear even the devil little, and God, less; but may I observe that you are occasionally still afraid of thieves, though as I said sometime since, I never can make out what you have got to be stolen.

For instance, much as we suppose ourselves desirous of beholding this Bethlehem Nativity, or getting any idea of it, I know an English gentleman who was offered the other day a picture of it, by a good master,—Raphael,—for five and twenty pounds; and said it was too dear: yet had paid, only a day or two before, five hundred pounds for a

pocket-pistol that shot people out of both ends, so afraid of thieves was he.*

None of these three masters, however, the masters of justice, temperance, or fortitude, were sent to the little Prince at Bethlehem. Young as he was, he had already been in some practice of these; but there was yet the fourth cardinal virtue, of which, as far as we can understand, he had to learn a new manner for his new reign: and the masters of that were sent to him—the masters of Obedience. For he had to become obedient unto death.

And the most wise—says the Greek—the most wise master of all, teaches the boy magic; and this magic is the service of the gods.

My skilled working friends, I have heard much of your magic lately. Sleight of hand, and better than that, (you say,) sleight of machine. Léger-de-main, improved into léger-de-mécanique. From the West, as from the East, now, your American, and Arabian magicians attend you; vociferously crying their new lamps for the old stable lantern of scapegoat's horn. And for the oil of the trees of Gethsemane, your American friends have struck oil more finely inflammable. Let Aaron look to it, how he lets any run down his beard; and the wise virgins trim their wicks cautiously, and Madelaine la Pétroleuse, with

* The papers had it that several gentlemen concurred in this piece of business; but they put the Nativity at five and twenty thousand, and the Agincourt, or whatever the explosive protector was called, at five hundred thousand.

her improved spikenard, take good heed how she breaks her alabaster, and completes the worship of her Christ.

Christmas, the mass of the Lord's anointed;—you will hear of devices enough to make it merry to you this year, I doubt not. The increase in the quantity of disposable malt liquor and tobacco is one great fact, better than all devices. Mr. Lowe has, indeed, says the *Times* of June 5th, "done the country good service, by placing before it, in a compendious form, the statistics of its own prosperity. . . . The twenty-two millions of people of 1825 drank barely nine millions of barrels of beer in the twelve months: our thirty-two millions now living drink all but twenty-six millions of barrels. The consumption of spirits has increased also, though in nothing like the same proportion; but whereas sixteen million pounds of tobacco sufficed for us in 1825, as many as forty-one million pounds are wanted now. By every kind of measure, therefore, and on every principle of calculation, the growth of our prosperity is established." *

Beer, spirits, and tobacco, are thus more than ever at your command; and magic besides, of lantern, and harlequin's wand; nay, necromancy if you will, the Witch of Endor at number so and so round the corner, and raising of the dead, if you roll away the tables from off them. But

* This last clause does not, you are however to observe, refer in the great Temporal Mind, merely to the merciful Dispensation of beer and tobacco, but to the general state of things, afterwards thus summed with exultation: "We doubt if there is a household in the kingdom which would now be contented with the conditions of living cheerfully accepted in 1825."

of this one sort of magic, this magic of Zoroaster, which is the service of God, you are not likely to hear. In one sense, indeed, you have heard enough of becoming God's servants; to wit, servants dressed in His court livery, to stand behind His chariot, with gold-headed sticks. Plenty of people will advise you to apply to Him for that sort of position: and many will urge you to assist Him in carrying out His intentions, and be what the Americans call helps, instead of servants.

Well! that may be, some day, truly enough; but before you can be allowed to help Him, you must be quite sure that you can *see* Him. It is a question now, whether you can even see any creature of His—or the least thing that He has made,—see it,—so as to ascribe due worth, or worship, to it,—how much less to its Maker?

You have felt, doubtless, at least those of you who have been brought up in any habit of reverence, that every time when in this letter I have used an American expression, or aught like one, there came upon you a sense of sudden wrong—the darting through you of acute cold. I meant you to feel that: for it is the essential function of America to make us all feel that. It is the new skill they have found there;—this skill of degradation; others they have, which other nations had before them, from whom they have learned all they know, and among whom they must travel, still, to see any human work worth seeing. But this is their speciality, this their one gift to their race,—to show men how *not* to worship,—how never to be

ashamed in the presence of anything. But the magic of Zoroaster is the exact reverse of this, to find out the worth of all things, and do them reverence.

Therefore, the Magi bring treasures, as being discerners of treasures, knowing what is intrinsically worthy, and worthless; what is best in brightness, best in sweetness, best in bitterness—gold, and frankincense, and myrrh. Finders of treasure hid in fields, and goodness in strange pearls, such as produce no effect whatever on the public mind, bent passionately on its own fashion of pearl-diving at Gennesaret.

And you will find that the essence of the mis-teaching, of your day, concerning wealth of any kind, is in this denial of intrinsic value. What anything is worth, or not worth, it cannot tell you: all that it can tell is the exchange value. What Judas, in the present state of Demand and Supply, can get for the article he has to sell, in a given market, that is the value of his article:—Yet you do not find that Judas had joy of his bargain. No Christmas, still less Easter, holidays, coming to him with merrymaking. Whereas, the Zoroastrians, who “take stars for money,” rejoice with exceeding great joy at seeing something, which—they cannot put in their pockets. For, “the vital principle of their religion is the recognition of one supreme power; the God of Light—in every sense of the word—the Spirit who creates the world, and rules it, and defends it against the power of Evil.”*

* MAX MÜLLER: *Genesis and the Zend-Avesta*.

I repeat to you, now, the question I put at the beginning of my letter. What is this Christmas to you? What Light is there, for your eyes, also, pausing yet over the place where the Child lay?

I will tell you, briefly, what Light there should be;—what lessons and promise are in this story, at the least. There may be infinitely more than I know; but there is certainly, this.

The Child is born to bring you the promise of new life. Eternal or not, is no matter; pure and redeemed, at least.

He is born twice on your earth; first, from the womb, to the life of toil, then, from the grave, to that of rest.

To his first life, he is born in a cattle-shed, the supposed son of a carpenter; and afterwards brought up to a carpenter's craft.

But the circumstances of his second life are, in great part, hidden from us: only note this much of it. The three principal appearances to his disciples are accompanied by giving or receiving of food. He is known at Emmaus in breaking of bread; at Jerusalem he himself eats fish and honey to show that he is not a spirit; and his charge to Peter is "when they had dined," the food having been obtained under his direction.

But in his first showing himself to the person who loved him best, and to whom he had forgiven most, there is a circumstance more singular and significant still. Observe—assuming the accepted belief to be true,—this was the first time when the Maker of men showed Himself to

human eyes, risen from the dead, to assure them of immortality. You might have thought He would have shown Himself in some brightly glorified form,—in some sacred and before unimaginable beauty.

He shows himself in so simple aspect, and dress, that she, who, of all people on the earth, should have known him best, glancing quickly back through her tears, does not know him. Takes him for “the gardener.”

Now, unless absolute orders had been given to us, such as would have rendered error impossible (which would have altered the entire temper of Christian probation); could we possibly have had more distinct indication of the purpose of the Master—born first by witness of shepherds, in a cattle-shed, then by witness of the person for whom he had done most, and who loved him best, in a garden, and in gardener’s guise, and not known even by his familiar friends till he gave them bread,—could it be told us, I repeat, more definitely by any sign or indication whatsoever, that the noblest human life was appointed to be by the cattle-fold and in the garden; and to be known as noble in breaking of bread?

Now, but a few words more. You will constantly hear foolish and ignoble persons conceitedly proclaiming the text, that “not many wise and not many noble are called.”

Nevertheless, of those who are truly wise, and truly noble, all are called that exist. And to sight of this Nativity, you find that, together with the simple persons, near

at hand, there were called precisely the Wisest men that could be found on earth at that moment.

And these men, for their own part, came—I beg you very earnestly again to note this—not to see, nor talk—but to do reverence. They are neither curious nor talkative, but submissive.

And, so far as they came to teach, they came as teachers of one virtue only: Obedience. For of this Child, at once Prince and Servant, Shepherd and Lamb, it was written: “See, mine elect, in whom my soul delighteth. He shall not strive, nor cry, till he shall bring forth Judgment unto Victory.”

My friends, of the Black country, you may have wondered at my telling you so often,—I tell you, nevertheless, once more, in bidding you farewell this year,—that one main purpose of the education I want you to seek is, that you may see the sky, with the stars of it again; and be enabled, in their material light—“*riweder le stelle.*”

But, much more, out of this blackness of the smoke of the Pit, the blindness of heart, in which the children of *Disobedience* blaspheme God and each other, heaven grant to you the vision of that sacred light, at pause over the place where the young child was laid; and ordain that more and more in each coming Christmas it may be said of you, “When they saw the Star, they rejoiced with exceeding great joy.”

Believe me your faithful servant,

JOHN RUSKIN.

LETTER XIII.

MY FRIENDS,

1st January, 1872.

I WOULD wish you a happy New Year, if I thought my wishes likely to be of the least use. Perhaps, indeed, if your cap of liberty were what you always take it for, a wishing cap, I might borrow it of you, for once; and be so much cheered by the chime of its bells, as to wish you a happy New Year, whether you deserved one or not: which would be the worst thing I could possibly bring to pass for you. But wishing cap, belled or silent, you can lend me none; and my wishes having proved, for the most part, vain for myself, except in making me wretched till I got rid of them, I will not present you with anything which I have found to be of so little worth. But if you trust more to anyone else's than mine, let me advise your requesting them to wish that you may deserve a happy New Year, whether you get one or not.

To some extent, indeed, that way, you are sure to get it: and it will much help you towards the seeing such way if you would make it a practice in your talk always to say you "deserve" things, instead of that you "have a right" to them. Say that you "deserve" a vote,— "deserve" so much a day, instead of that you have "a right to" a vote, &c. The expression is both more ac-

curate and more general ; for if it chanced, which heaven forbid,—but it might be,—that you deserved a whipping, you would never think of expressing that fact by saying you “had a right to” a whipping; and if you deserve anything better than that, why conceal your deserving under the neutral term, “rights;” as if you never meant to claim more than might be claimed also by entirely nugatory and worthless persons. Besides, such accurate use of language will lead you sometimes into reflection on the fact, that what you deserve, it is not only well for you to get, but certain that you ultimately *will* get; and neither less nor more.

Ever since Carlyle wrote that sentence about rights and might, in his “French Revolution,” all blockheads of a benevolent class have been declaiming against him, as a worshipper of force. What else, in the name of the three Magi, *is* to be worshipped? Force of brains, Force of heart, Force of hand;—will you dethrone these, and worship apoplexy?—despise the spirit of Heaven, and worship phthisis? Every condition of idolatry is summed in the one broad wickedness of refusing to worship Force, and resolving to worship No-Force;—denying the Almighty, and bowing down to four-and-twopence with a stamp on it. •

But Carlyle never meant in that place to refer you to such fival truth. He meant but to tell you that before you dispute about what you should get, you would do well to find out first what is to be gotten. Which

briefly is, for everybody, at last, their deserts, and no more.

I did not choose, in beginning this book a year since, to tell you what I meant it to become. This, for one of several things, I mean, that it shall put before you so much of the past history of the world, in an intelligible manner, as may enable you to see the laws of Fortune or Destiny, "Clavigera," Nail bearing; or, in the full idea, nail-and-hammer bearing; driving the iron home with hammer-stroke, so that nothing shall be moved; and fastening each of us at last to the Cross we have chosen to carry. Nor do I doubt being able to show you that this irresistible power is also just; appointing measured return for every act and thought, such as men deserve.

And that being so, foolish moral writers will tell you that whenever you do wrong you will be punished, and whenever you do right rewarded: which is true, but only half the truth. And foolish immoral writers will tell you that if you do right, you will get no good; and if you do wrong dexterously, no harm. Which, in their sense of good and harm, is true also, but, even in that sense, only half the truth. The joined and four-square truth is, that every right is exactly rewarded, and every wrong exactly punished; but that, in the midst of this subtle, and, to our impatience, slow, retribution, there is a startlingly separate or counter ordinance of good and evil,—one to this man, and the other to that,—one at this hour of our lives, and the other at that,—ordinance which

is entirely beyond our control; and of which the providential law, hitherto, defies investigation.

To take an example near at hand, which I can answer for. Throughout the year which ended this morning, I have been endeavouring, more than hitherto in any equal period, to act for others more than for myself: and looking back on the twelve months, am satisfied that in some measure I have done right. So far as I am sure of that, I see also, even already, definitely proportioned fruit, and clear results following from that course;—consequences simply in accordance with the unfailing and undeceivable Law of Nature.

That it has chanced to me, in the course of the same year, to have to sustain the most acute mental pain yet inflicted on my life;—to pass through the most nearly mortal illness;—and to write your Christmas letter beside my mother's dead body, are appointments merely of the hidden Fors, or Destiny, whose power I mean to trace for you in past history, being hitherto, in the reasons of it, indecipherable, yet palpably following certain laws of storm, which are in the last degree wonderful and majestic.

Setting this Destiny, over which you have no control whatsoever, for the time, out of your thoughts, there remains the symmetrical destiny, over which you have control absolute—namely, that you are ultimately to get—exactly what you are worth.

And your control over this destiny consists, therefore,

simply in *being* worth more or less, and not at all in voting that you are worth more or less. Nay, though you should leave voting, and come to fighting, which I see is next proposed, you will not, even that way, arrive any nearer to your object—admitting that you *have* an object, which is much to be doubted. I hear, indeed, that you mean to fight for a Republic, in consequence of having been informed by Mr. John Stuart Mill, and others, that a number of utilities are embodied in that object. We will inquire into the nature of this object presently, going over the ground of my last January's letter again; but first, may I suggest to you that it would be more prudent, instead of fighting to make us all republicans against our will,—to make the most of the republicans you have got. There are many, you tell me, in England,—more in France, a sprinkling in Italy,—and nobody else in the United States. What should you fight for, being already in such prevalence? Fighting is unpleasant, now-a-days, however glorious, what with mitrailleuses, torpedoes, and mis-managed commissariat. And what, I repeat, should you fight for? All the fighting in the world cannot make us Tories change our old opinions, any more than it will make you change your new ones. It cannot make us leave off calling each other names if we like—Lord this, and the Duke of that, whether you republicans like it or not. After a great deal of trouble on both sides, it might, indeed, end in abolishing our property;

but without any trouble on either side, why cannot your friends begin by abolishing their own? Or even abolishing a tithe of their own. Ask them to do merely as much as I, an objectionable old Tory, have done for you. Make them send you in an account of their little properties, and strike you off a tenth, for what purposes you see good; and for the remaining nine-tenths, you will find clue to what should be done in the *Republican* of last November, wherein Mr. W. Riddle, C.E., "fearlessly states" that all property must be taken under control; which is, indeed, precisely what Mr. Carlyle has been telling you these last thirty years, only he seems to have been under an impression, which I certainly shared with him, that you republicans objected to control of any description. Whereas if you let anybody put your property under control, you will find practically he has a good deal of hold upon you also.

You are not all agreed upon that point perhaps? But you are all agreed that you want a Republic. Though England is a rich country, having worked herself literally black in the face to become so, she finds she cannot afford to keep a Queen any longer;—is doubtful even whether she would not get on better Queenless; and I see with consternation that even one of my own personal friends, Mr. Auberon Herbert, rising the other day at Nottingham, in the midst of great cheering, declares that, though he is not in favour of any immediate change, yet, "if we asked ourselves what form of government

was the most reasonable, the most in harmony with ideas of self-government and self-responsibility, and what Government was most likely to save us from unnecessary divisions of party, and to weld us into one compact mass, he had no hesitation in saying the weight of argument was in favour of a Republic.”*

Well, suppose we *were* all welded into a compact mass. Might it not still be questionable what sort of a mass we were? After any quantity of puddling, iron is still nothing better than iron;—in any rarity of dispersion, gold-dust is still gold. Mr. Auberon Herbert thinks it desirable that you should be stuck together. Be it so; but what is there to stick? At this time of year, doubtless, some of your children, interested generally in production of puddings, delight themselves, to your great annoyance, with speculative pudding in the gutter; and enclose, between unctuous tops and bottoms, imaginary mince. But none of them, I suppose, deliberately come in to their mothers, at cooking-time, with materials for a treat on Republican principles. Mud for suet—gravel for plums—droppings of what heaven may send for flavour;—“Please, mother, a towel, to knot it tight—(or, to use Mr. Herbert’s expression, “weld it into a compact mass”)—Now for the old saucepan, mother; and you just lay the cloth!”

My friends, I quoted to you last year the foolishhest

* See *Pall Mall Gazette*, Dec. 5th, 1871.

thing, yet said, according to extant history, by lips of mankind—namely, that the cause of starvation is quantity of meat.* But one can yet see what the course of foolish thought was which achieved that saying: whereas, though it is not absurd to quite the same extent to believe that a nation depends for happiness and virtue on the form of its government, it is more difficult to understand how so large a number of otherwise rational persons have been beguiled into thinking so. The stuff of which the nation is made is developed by the effort and the fate of ages: according to that material, such and such government becomes possible to it, or impossible. What other form of government you try upon it than the one it is fit for, necessarily comes to nothing; and a nation wholly worthless is capable of none.

Notice, therefore, carefully Mr. Herbert's expression "welded into a compact mass." The phrase would be likely enough to occur to anyone's mind, in a midland district; and meant, perhaps, no more than if the speaker had said "melted," or "blended" into a mass. But whether Mr. Herbert meant more or not, his words mean more. You may melt glass or glue into a mass, but you can only weld, or wield, metal. And are you sure that, if you would have a Republic, you are capable of being welded into one? Granted that you

* Letter IV. p. 21. Compare Letter V. p. 5; and observe, in future references of this kind I shall merely say, IV. 21; V. 5. &c.

are no better than iron, are you as good? Have you the toughness in you? and can you bear the hammering? Or, would your fusion together,—your literal con-fusion—be as of glass only, blown thin with nitrogen, and shattered before it got cold?

Welded Republics there indeed have been, ere now, but they ask first for bronze, then for a hammerer, and mainly, for patience on the anvil. Have you any of the three at command,—patience, above all things, the most needed, yet not one of your prominent virtues? And, finally, for the cost of such smith's work,—My good friends, let me recommend you, in that point of view, to keep your Queen.

Therefore, for your first bit of history this year, I will give you one pertinent to the matter, which will show you how a monarchy, and such a Republic as you are now capable of producing, have verily acted on special occasion, so that you may compare their function accurately.

The special occasion that I choose shall be the most solemn of all conceivable acts of Government; the adjudging and execution of the punishment of Death. The two examples of it shall be, one under an absolutely despotic Monarchy, acting through ministers trained in principles of absolute despotism; and the other, in a completely free Republic, acting by its collective wisdom, and in association of its practical energies.

The example of despotism shall be taken from the

book which Mr. Froude most justly calls "the prose epic of the English nation," the records compiled by Richard Hakluyt, Preacher, and sometime Student of Christchurch in Oxford, imprinted at London by Ralph Newberie, anno 1599, and then in five volumes, quarto, in 1811, two hundred and seventy copies only of this last edition being printed.

These volumes contain the original—usually personal,—narratives of the earliest voyages of the great seamen of all countries,—the chief part of them English; who "first went out across the unknown seas, fighting, discovering, colonizing; and graved out the channels, paving them at last with their bones, through which the commerce and enterprise of England has flowed out over all the world."* I mean to give you many pieces to read out of this book, which Mr. Froude tells you truly is your English Homer; this piece, to our present purpose, is already quoted by him in his essay on England's forgotten worthies; among whom, far-forgotten though they be, most of you must have heard named Sir Francis Drake. And of him, it now imports you to know this much; that he was the son of a clergyman, who fled into Devonshire to escape the persecution of Henry VIII. (abetted by our old friend, Sir Thomas of Utopia)—that the little Frank was apprenticed by his father to the

* J. A. Froude, *Short Studies on Great Subjects*. Longmans, 1867; p. 297.

master of a small vessel trading to the Low Countries; and that as apprentice, he behaved so well that his master, dying, left him his vessel, and he begins his independent life with that capital. Tiring of affairs with the Low Countries, he sells his little ship, and invests his substance in the new trade to the West Indies. In the course of his business there, the Spaniards attack him, and carry off his goods. Whereupon, Master Francis Drake, making his way back to England, and getting his brother John to join with him, after due deliberation, fits out two ships, to wit, the *Passover* of 70 tons, and the *Swan* of 24, with 73 men and boys (both crews, all told), and a year's provision; and, thus appointed, Master Frank in command of the *Passover*, and Master John in command of the *Swan*, weigh anchor from Plymouth on the 24th of May, 1572, to make reprisals on the most powerful nation of the then world. And making his way in this manner over the Atlantic, and walking with his men across the Isthmus of Panama, he beholds "from the top of a very high hill, the great South Sea, on which no English ship had ever sailed. Whereupon, he lifted up his hands to God, and implored his blessing on the resolution which he then formed, of sailing in an English ship on that sea." In the meantime, building some light fighting pinnaces, of which he had brought out the material in the *Passover*, and boarding what Spanish ships he can, transferring his men to such as he finds most convenient to fight in.

he keeps the entire coast of Spanish America in hot water for several months; and having taken and rifled, between Carthagena and Nombre de Dios (Name of God) more than two hundred ships of all sizes, sets sail cheerfully for England, arriving at Plymouth on the 9th of August, 1573, on Sunday, in the afternoon; and so much were the people delighted with the news of their arrival, that they left the preacher, and ran in crowds to the quay, with shouts and congratulations.

He passes four years in England, explaining American affairs to Queen Elizabeth and various persons at court; and at last in mid-life, in the year 1577, he obtains a commission from the Queen, by which he is constituted Captain-general of a fleet of five ships: the *Pelican*, admiral, 100 tons, his own ship; the *Elizabeth*, vice-admiral, 80 tons; the *Swan*, 50 tons; *Marigold*, 30; and *Christopher* (Christbearer) 15; the collective burden of the entire fleet being thus 275 tons; its united crews 164 men, all told: and it carries whatever Sir Francis thought "might contribute to raise in those nations, with whom he should have any intercourse, the highest ideas of the politeness and magnificence of his native country. He, therefore, not only procured a complete service of silver for his own table, and furnished the cook-room with many vessels of the same metal, but engaged several musicians to accompany him."

I quote from Johnson's life of him,—you do not know

if in jest or earnest? Always in earnest, believe me, good friends. If there be jest in the nature of things, or of men, it is no fault of mine. I try to set them before you as they truly are. And Sir Francis and his crew, musicians and all, were in uttermost earnest, as in the quiet course of their narrative you will find. For arriving on the 20th of June, 1578, "in a very good harborough, called by Magellan Port St. Julian, where we found a gibbet standing upon the maine, which we supposed to be the place where Magellan did execution upon his disobedient and rebellious company; . . . in this port our Generall began to inquire diligently of the actions of M. Thomas Doughtie, and found them not to be such as he looked for, but tending rather to contention or mutinie, or some other disorder, whereby (without redresse) the successe of the voyage might greatly have bene hazarded; whereupon the company was called together and made acquainted with the particulars of the cause, which were found, partly by Master Doughtie's owne confession, and partly by the evidence of the fact, to be true; which when our Generall saw, although his private affection to M. Doughtie (as hee then in the presence of us all sacredly protested) was great, yet the care he had of the state of the voyage, of the expectation of her Maiestie, and of the honour of his countrey, did more touch him (as, indeede, it ought) than the private respect of one man: so that, the cause being thoroughly heard, and all things done in good

order, as neere as might be to the course of our lawes in England, it was concluded that M. Doughtie should receive punishment according to the qualitie of the offence: and he, seeing no remedie but patience for himselfe, desired before his death to receive the Communion, which he did at the hands of M. Fletcher, our Minister, and our Generall himselfe accompanied him in that holy action: which being done, and the place of execution made ready, hee having embraced our Generall, and taken his leave of all the companie, with prayer for the Queen's Maiestie and our realme, in quiet sort laid his head to the blocke, where he ended his life. This being done, our Generall made divers speaches to the whole company, persuading us to unitie, obedience, love, and regard of our voyage; and for the better confirmation thereof, willed evry man the next Sunday following to prepare himselfe to receive the Communion, as Christian brethren and friends ought to doe, which was done in very reverent sort, and so with good contentment every man went about his businesse."

Thus pass judgment and execution, under a despotic Government and despotic Admiral, by religious, or, it may be, superstitious, laws.

You shall next see how judgment and execution pass on the purest republican principles; every man's opinion being held as good as his neighbour's; and no superstitious belief whatsoever interfering with the wisdom of popular decision, or the liberty of popular

action. The republicanism shall also be that of this enlightened nineteenth century: in other respects the circumstances are similar; for the event takes place during an expedition of British—not subjects, indeed, but quite unsubjected persons,—acknowledging neither Queen nor Admiral,—in search, nevertheless, of gold and silver, in America, like Sir Francis himself. And to make all more precisely illustrative, I am able to take the account of the matter from the very paper which contained Mr. Auberon Herbert's speech, the *Pall Mall Gazette* of 5th December last. In another column, a little before the addresses of the members for Nottingham, you will therein find, quoted from the *New York Tribune*, the following account of some executions which took place at “the Angels” (Los Angeles), California, on the 24th October.

“The victims were some unoffending Chinamen, the executioners were some ‘warm-hearted and impulsive’ Irishmen, assisted by some Mexicans. It seems that owing to an impression that the houses inhabited by the Chinamen were filled with gold, a mob collected in front of a store belonging to one of them named Yo Hing with the object of plundering it. The Chinamen barricaded the building, shots were fired, and an American was killed. Then commenced the work of pillage and murder. The mob forced an entrance, four Chinamen were shot dead, seven or eight were wounded, and seventeen were taken and hanged. The following

description of the hanging of the first victim will show how the executions were conducted:—

“Weng Chin, a merchant, was the first victim of hanging. He was led through the streets by two lusty Irishmen, who were cheered on by a crowd of men and boys, most of Irish and Mexican birth. Several times the unfortunate Chinaman faltered or attempted to extricate himself from the two brutes who were leading him, when a half-drunken Mexican in his immediate rear would plunge the point of a large dirk knife into his back. This, of course, accelerated his speed, but never a syllable fell from his mouth. Arriving at the eastern gate of Tomlinson's old lumber yard, just out of Temple Street, hasty preparations for launching the inoffensive man into eternity were followed by his being pulled up to the beam with a rope round his neck. He didn't seem to ‘hang right,’ and one of the Irishmen got upon his shoulders and jumped upon them, breaking his collar-bone. What with shots, stabs, and strangulation, and other modes of civilized torture, the victim was ‘hitched up’ for dead, and the crowd gave vent to their savage delight in demoniac yells and a jargon which too plainly denoted their Hibernian nationality.”

“One victim, a Chinese physician of some celebrity, Dr. Gnee Sing, offered his tormentors 4,000 dollars in gold to let him go. His pockets were immediately cut and ransacked, a pistol-shot mutilated one side of his face ‘dreadfully,’ and he too was ‘stretched up’ with cheers. Another wretched man was jerked up with great force against the beam, and the operation repeated until his head was broken in a way we cannot describe. Three Chinese, one a youth of about fifteen years old, picked up at random, and innocent of even a knowledge of the disturbance, were hanged in the

same brutal manner. Hardly a word escaped them, but the younger one said, as the rope was being placed round his neck, 'Me no 'fraid to die; me velly good China boy; me no hurt no man.' Three Chinese boys who were hanged 'on the side of a wagon' struggled hard for their lives. One managed to lay hold of the rope, upon which two Irishmen beat his hands with clubs and pistols till he released his hold and fell into a 'hanging position.' The Irishmen then blazed away at him with bullets, and so put an end to his existence."

My republican friends—or otherwise than friends, as you choose to have it—you will say, I presume, that this comparison of methods of magistracy is partial and unfair? It is so. All comparisons—as all experiments—are unfair till you have made more. More you shall make with me; and as many as you like, on your own side. I will tell you, in due time, some tales of Tory gentlemen who lived, and would scarcely let anybody else live, at Padua and Milan, which will do your hearts good. Meantime, meditate a little over these two instances of capital justice, as done severally by monarchists and republicans in the sixteenth and nineteenth centuries; and meditate, not a little, on the capital justice which you have lately accomplished yourselves in France. You have had it all your own way there, since Sedan. No Emperor to paralyze your

hands any more, or impede the flow of your conversation. Anything, since that fortunate hour, to be done,—anything to be said, that you liked; and in the midst of you, found by sudden good fortune, two quite honest and brave men; one old and one young, ready to serve you with all their strength, and evidently of supreme gifts in the way of service,—Generals Trochu and Rossel. You have exiled one, shot the other,* and, but that, as I told you, my wishes are of no account that I know of, I should wish you joy of your “situation.”

Believe me, faithfully yours,

JOHN RUSKIN.

* “You did not shoot him?” No; my expression was hasty; you only stood by, in a social manner, to see him shot;—how many of you?—and so finely organized as you say you are!

LETTER XIV.

DENMARK HILL,

MY FRIENDS,

1st February, 1872.

IN going steadily over our ground again, roughly broken last year, you see that, after endeavouring, as I did last month, to make you see somewhat more clearly the absurdity of fighting for a Holy Republic before you are sure of having got so much as a single saint to make it of, I have now to illustrate farther the admission made in page 8 of my first Letter, that even the most courteous and perfect Monarchy cannot make an unsaintly life into a saintly one, nor constitute thieving, for instance, an absolutely praiseworthy profession, however glorious or delightful. It is indeed more difficult to show this in the course of past history than any other moral truth whatsoever. For, without doubt or exception, thieving has not only hitherto been the most respected of professions, but the most healthy, cheerful, and in the practical outcome of it, though not in theory, even the honestest, followed by men. Putting the higher traditional and romantic ideals, such as that of our Robin Hood, and the Scottish Red Robin, for the time, aside, and keeping to meagre historical facts, could any of you help giving your heartiest sympathy to Master Francis Drake, setting out in his little *Paschal Lamb* to seek his fortune on the Spanish seas, and coming home, on that

happy Sunday morning, to the unspeakable delight of the Cornish congregation? Would you like to efface the stories of Edward III., and his lion's whelp, from English history; and do you wish that instead of pillaging the northern half of France, as you read of them in the passages quoted in my fourth Letter, and fighting the Battle of Crecy to get home again, they had stayed at home all the time; and practised, shall we say, upon the flute, as I find my moral friends think Frederick of Prussia should have done? Or would you have chosen that your Prince Harry should never have played that set with his French tennis-balls, which won him Harfleur, and Rouen, and Orleans, and other such counters, which we might have kept, to this day perhaps, in our pockets, but for the wood maid of Domremy? Are you ready, even now, in the height of your morality, to give back India to the Brahmins and their cows, and Australia to her aborigines and their apes? You are ready? Well, my Christian friends, it does one's heart good to hear it, providing only you are quite sure you know what you are about. "Let him that stole steal no more; but rather let him labour." You are verily willing to accept that alternative? I inquire anxiously, because I see that your Under Secretary of State for India, Mr. Grant Duff, proposes to you, in his speech at Elgin, not at all as the first object of your lives to be honest; but, as the first, to be rich, and the second to be intelligent; now when you have all become rich and intelligent, how do you mean to live? Mr. Grant Duff, of course, means

by being rich that you are each to have two powdered footmen; but then who are to be the footmen, now that we mustn't have blacks? And granting you all the intelligence in the world on the most important subjects,—the spots in the sun, or the nodes of the moon, as aforesaid—will that help you to get your dinner, unless you steal it in the old fashion? The subject is indeed discussed with closer definition than by Mr. Grant Duff, by Mr. William Riddle, C.E., the authority I quoted to you for taking property “under control.” You had better perhaps be put in complete possession of his views, as stated by himself in the *Republican*, of December last; the rather, as that periodical has not had, according to Mr. Riddle, hitherto a world-wide circulation:—

“THE SIMPLE AND ONLY REMEDY FOR THE WANTS OF
NATIONS.

“It is with great grief that I hear that your periodical finds but a limited sale. I ask you to insert a few words from me, which may strike some of your readers as being important. These are *all in all*. What all nations want, Sir, are—1, Shelter; 2, Food; 3, Clothes; 4, Warmth; 5, Cleanliness; 6, Health; 7, Love; 8, Beauty. These are only to be got in one way. I will state it. An International Congress must make a number of steam engines, or use those now made, and taking all property under its control (I fearlessly state it) must roll off iron and glass for buildings to shelter hundreds of millions of people. 2.—

Must, by such engines, make steam apparatus to plough immense plains of wheat, where steam has elbow-room abroad ; must make engines to grind it on an enormous scale, first fetching it in flat-bottomed ships, made of simple form, larger than the *Great Eastern*, and of simple form of plates, machine fastened ; must bake it by machine ovens commensurate. 3.—Machine looms must work unattended night and day, rolling off textile yarns and fabrics, and machines must make clothes, just as envelopes are knocked off. 4.—Machinery must do laundress work, iron and mangling, and, in a word, our labour must give place to machinery, laid down in gigantic factories on common-sense principles by an International leverage. This is the education you must inculcate. Then man will be at last emancipated. All else is utter bosh, and I will prove it so when and wherever I can get the means to lecture.

“WM. RIDDLE, C.E.

“South Lambeth, Nov. 2.”

Unfortunately, till those means can be obtained (may it be soon), it remains unriddled to us on what principles of “international leverage” the love and beauty are to be provided. But the point I wish you mainly to notice is, that for this general emancipation, and elbow-room for men and steam, you are still required to find “immense plains of wheat abroad.” Is it not probable that these immense plains may belong to somebody “abroad” already? And if not, instead of bringing home their produce in flat-bottomed ships, why not establish, on the plains themselves,

your own flat-bottomed—I beg pardon,—flat-bellied, persons, instead of living here in glass cases, which surely, even at the British Museum, cannot be associated in your minds with the perfect manifestation of love and beauty? It is true that love is to be measured, in your perfected political economy, by rectangular area, as you will find on reference to the ingenious treatise of Mr. W. Stanley Jevons, M.A., Professor of Logic and Political Economy in Owen's College, Manchester, who informs you, among other interesting facts, that pleasure and pain “are the ultimate objects of the calculus of economy,” and that a feeling, whether of pleasure or pain, may be regarded as having two dimensions—namely, in duration and intensity, so that the feeling, say of a minute, “may be represented by a rectangle whose base corresponds to the duration of a minute, and whose height is proportioned to the intensity.”* The collective area of the series of rectangles will mark the “aggregate of feeling generated.”

But the Professor appears unconscious that there is a third dimension of pleasure and pain to be considered, besides their duration and intensity; and that this third dimension is to some persons, the most important of all—namely, their quality. It is possible to die of a rose in aromatic pain; and, on the contrary, for flies and rats, even

* I quote from the *Pall Mall Gazette* of January 16th. In the more elaborate review given in the *Fortnightly*, I am glad to see that Professor Caird is beginning to perceive the necessity of defining the word “useful;” and, though greatly puzzled, is making way towards a definition; but would it not be wiser to abstain from exhibiting himself in his state of puzzlement to the public?

pleasure may be the reverse of aromatic. There is swine's pleasure, and dove's; villain's pleasure, and gentleman's, to be arranged, the Professor will find, by higher analysis, in eternally dissimilar rectangles.

My friends, the follies of modern Liberalism, many and great though they be, are practically summed in this denial or neglect of the quality and intrinsic value of things. Its rectangular beatitudes, and spherical benevolences,—theology of universal indulgence, and jurisprudence which will hang no rogues, mean, one and all of them, in the root, incapacity of discerning, or refusal to discern, worth and unworth in anything, and least of all in man; whereas Nature and Heaven command you, at your peril, to discern worth from unworth in everything, and most of all in man. Your main problem is that ancient and trite one, "Who is best man?" and the Fates forgive much,—forgive the wildest, fiercest, cruelest experiments,—if fairly made for the determination of that. Theft and blood-guiltiness are not pleasing in their sight; yet the favouring powers of the spiritual and material world will confirm to you your stolen goods; and their noblest voices applaud the lifting of your spear, and rehearse the sculpture of your shield, if only your robbing and slaying have been in fair arbitrement of that question, "Who is best man?" But if you refuse such inquiry, and maintain every man for his neighbour's match,*—if you give vote to the simple,

* Every man as good as his neighbour! you extremely sagacious English persons; and forthwith you establish competitive examination

and liberty to the vile, the powers of those spiritual and material worlds in due time present you inevitably with the same problem, soluble now only wrong side upwards; and your robbing and slaying must be done then to find out "Who is *worst* man?" Which, in so wide an order of merit, is, indeed, not easy; but a complete Tammany Ring, and lowest circle in the Inferno of Worst, you are sure to find, and to be governed by.

And you may note that the wars of men, in this winnowing or sifting function, separate themselves into three distinct stages. In healthy times of early national development, the best men go out to battle, and divide the spoil; in rare generosity, perhaps, giving as much to those who tarry by the stuff, as to those who have followed to the field. In the second, and more ingenious stage, which is the one we have reached now in England and America, the best men still go out to battle, and get themselves killed,—or, at all events, well withdrawn from public affairs,—and the worst stop at home, manage the government, and make money out of the commissariat. (See § 124 of *Munera Pulveris*, and my note there, on the last American War.) Then the third and last stage, immediately preceding the dissolution of any nation, is when 'its

which drives your boys into idiocy, before you will give them a bit of bread to make their young muscles of! Every man as good as his neighbour! and when I told you, seven years ago, that at least you should give every man his penny of wages, whether he was good or not, so only that he gave you the best that was in him, what did you answer to me?

best men (such as they are)—stop at home too!—and pay other people to fight for them. And this last stage, not wholly reached in England yet, is, however, within near prospect; at least, if we may again on this point refer to, and trust, the anticipations of Mr. Grant Duff, “who racks his brains, without success, to think of any probable combination of European events in which the assistance of our English force would be half so useful to our allies as money.”

Next month I will give you some farther account of the operations in favour of their Italian allies in the fourteenth century, effected by the White company under Sir John Hawkwood;—(they first crossed the Alps with a German captain, however,)—not at all consisting in disbursements of money; but such, on the contrary, as to obtain for them (as you read in my first Letter) the reputation, with good Italian judges, of being the best thieves known at the time. It is in many ways important for you to understand the origin and various tendencies of mercenary warfare; the essential power of which, in Christendom, dates, singularly enough, from the struggle of the free burghers of Italy with a Tory gentleman, a friend of Frederic II. of Germany; the quarrel, of which you shall hear the prettiest parts, being one of the most dramatic and vital passages of mediæval history. Afterwards we shall be able to examine, more intelligently, the prospects in store for us according to the—I trust not too painfully racked,—brains of our Under

Secretary of State. But I am tired to-day of following modern thought in these unexpectedly attenuated conditions; and I believe you will also be glad to rest, with me, by reading a few words of true history of such life as, in here and there a hollow of the rocks of Europe, just persons have sometimes lived, untracked by the hounds of war. And in laying them before you, I begin to give these letters the completed character I intend for them; first, as it may seem to me needful, commenting on what is passing at the time, with reference always to the principles and plans of economy I have to set before you; and then collecting out of past literature, and in occasional frontispieces or woodcuts, out of past art, what may confirm or illustrate things that are for ever true: choosing the pieces of the series so that, both in art and literature, they may become to you in the strictest sense, educational, and familiarise you with the look and manner of fine work.

I want you, accordingly, now to read attentively some pieces of agricultural economy, out of Marmontel's "*Contes Moraux*,"—(we too grandly translate the title into "*Moral Tales*," for the French word *Mœurs* does not in accuracy correspond to our "Morals"); and I think it first desirable that you should know something about Marmontel himself. He was a French gentleman of the old school; not noble, nor, in French sense, even "*gentilhomme*;" but a peasant's son, who made his way into Parisian society by gentleness, wit, and a dainty and

candid literary power. He became one of the humblest, yet honestest, placed scholars at the court of Louis XV., and wrote pretty, yet wise, sentimental stories, in finished French, which I must render as I can in broken English; but, however rudely translated, the sayings and thoughts in them deserve your extreme attention, for in their fine, tremulous way, like the blossoming heads of grass in May, they are perfect. For introduction then, you shall have, to-day, his own description of his native place, Bort, in central south France, and of the circumstances of his child-life. You must take it without further preamble—my pages running short.

“Bort, situated on the river Dordogne, between Auvergne and the province of Limoges, is a frightful place enough, seen by the traveller descending suddenly on it; lying, as it does, at the bottom of a precipice, and looking as if the storm torrents would sweep it away, or as if, some day, it must be crushed under a chain of volcanic rocks, some planted like towers on the height which commands the town, and others already overhanging, or half uprooted: but, once in the valley, and with the eye free to wander there, Bort becomes full of smiles. Above the town, in a green island which the river embraces with equal streams, there is a thicket peopled with birds, and animated also with the motion and noise of a mill. On each side of the river are orchards and fields, cultivated with laborious care. Below the village the valley opens, on one side of the river, into a broad, flat meadow,

watered by springs; on the other, into sloping fields, crowned by a belt of hills whose soft slope contrasts with the opposing rocks, and is divided, farther on, by a torrent which rolls and leaps through the forest, and falls into the Dordogne in one of the most beautiful cataracts on the Continent. Near that spot is situated the little farm of St. Thomas, where I used to read Virgil under the blossoming trees that surrounded our bee-hives, and where I made delicious lunches of their honey. On the other side of the town, above the mill, and on the slope to the river, was the enclosure where, on fête days, my father took me to gather grapes from the vines he had himself planted, or cherries, plums, and apples from the trees he had grafted.

“But what in my memory is the chief charm of my native place is the impression of the affection which my family had for me, and with which my soul was penetrated in earliest infancy. If there is any goodness in my character, it is to these sweet emotions, and the perpetual happiness of loving and being loved that I believe it is owing. What a gift does Heaven bestow on us in the virtue of parents?

“I owed much also to a certain gentleness of manners which reigned then in my native town; and truly the sweet and simple life that one led there must have had a strange attraction, for nothing was more unusual than that the children of Bort should ever go away from it. In their youth they were well educated, and in the neigh-

bouring colleges their colony distinguished itself; but they came back to their homes as a swarm of bees comes back to the hive with its spoil.

“I learned to read in a little convent where the nuns were friends of my mother. Thence I passed to the school of a priest of the town, who gratuitously, and for his own pleasure, devoted himself to the instruction of children; he was the only son of a shoemaker, one of the honestest fellows in the world; and this churchman was a true model of filial piety. I can yet remember, as if I had seen it but a moment since, the air of quiet courtesy and mutual regard which the old man and his son maintained to each other; the one never losing sight of the dignity of the priesthood, nor the other of the sanctity of the paternal character.”

I interrupt my translation for a moment to ask you to notice how this finished scholar applies his words. A vulgar writer would most probably have said “the sanctity of the priesthood” and the “dignity of the paternal character.” But it is quite possible that a priest may not be a saint, yet (admitting the theory of priesthood at all) his authority and office are not, therefore, invalidated. On the other hand, a father may be entirely inferior to his son, incapable of advising him, and, if he be wise, claiming no strict authority over him. But the relation between the two is always sacred.

“The Abbé Vaissière” (that was his name), “after he had fulfilled his duty at the church, divided the rest of his

time between reading, and the lessons he gave to us. In fine weather, a little walk, and sometimes for exercise a game at mall in the meadow, were his only amusements. For all society he had two friends, people of esteem, in our town. They lived together in the most peaceful intimacy, seeing each other every day, and every day with the same pleasure in their meeting; and for fulfilment of good fortune, they died within a very little while of each other. I have scarcely ever seen an example of so sweet and constant equality in the course of human life.

“At this school I had a comrade, who was from my infancy an object of emulation to me. His deliberate and rational bearing, his industry in study, the care he took of his books, on which I never saw a stain; his fair hair always so well combed, his dress always fresh in its simplicity, his linen always white, were to me a constantly visible example; and it is rare that a child inspires another child with such esteem as I had for him. His father was a labourer in a neighbouring village, and well known to mine. I used to walk with his son to see him in his home. How he used to receive us, the white-haired old man—the good cream! the good brown bread that he gave us! and what happy presages did he not please himself in making for my future life, because of my respect for his old age! Twenty years afterwards, his son and I met at Paris; I recognized in him the same character of prudence and kindness which I had known in him at school, and it has been to me no slight pleasure to name one of his children at baptism.

“When I was eleven years old, just past, my master judged me fit to enter the fourth class of students; and my father consented, though unwillingly, to take me to the College of Mauriac. His reluctance was wise. I must justify it by giving some account of our household.

“I was the eldest of many children; my father, a little rigid, but entirely good under his severe manner, loved his wife to idolatry; and well he might! I have never been able to understand how, with the simple education of our little convent at Bort, she had attained so much pleasantness in wit, so much elevation in heart, and a sentiment of propriety so just, pure, and subtle. My good Bishop of Limoges has often spoken to me since, at Paris, with most tender interest, of the letters that my mother wrote in recommending me to him.

“My father revered her as much as he loved; and blamed her only for her too great tenderness for me: but my grandmother loved me no less. I think I see her yet—the good little old woman! the bright nature that she had! the gentle gaiety! Economist of the house, she presided over its management, and was an example to us all of filial tenderness, for she had also her own mother and her husband’s mother to take care of. I am now dating far back, being just able to remember my great grandmother drinking her little cup of wine at the corner of the hearth; but, during the whole of my childhood my grandmother and her three sisters lived with us, and among all these women, and a swarm of children, my father stood alone,

their support. With little means enough, all could live Order, economy, and labour,—a little commerce, but above all things, frugality.” (Note again the good scholar’s accuracy of language. “Economy” the right arrangement of things, “Frugality” the careful and fitting use of them)—“these maintained us all in comfort. The little garden produced vegetables enough for the need of the house ; the orchard gave us fruit, and our quinces, apples, and pears, preserved in the honey of our bees, made, during the winter, for the children and old women, the most exquisite breakfasts.”

I interrupt again to explain to you, once for all, a chief principle with me in translation. Marmontel says, “for the children and *good* old women.” Were I quoting the French I would give his exact words, but in translating I miss the word “good,” of which I know you are not likely to see the application at the moment. You would not see why the old women should be called good, when the question is only what they had for breakfast. Marmontel means that if they had been bad old women they would have wanted gin and bitters for breakfast, instead of honey-candied quinces ; but I can’t always stop to tell you Marmontel’s meaning, or other people’s, and therefore if I think it not likely to strike you, and the word weakens the sentence in the direction I want you to follow, I omit it in translating, as I do also entire sentences, here and there ; but never, as aforesaid, in actual quotation.

“The flock of the fold of St. Thomas, clothed, with its

wool, now the women, and now the children; my aunt spun it, and spun also the hemp which made our under-dress; the children of our neighbours came to beat it with us in the evening by lamp-light, (our own walnut trees giving us the oil,) and formed a ravishing picture. The harvest of our little farm assured our subsistence; the wax and honey of our bees, of which one of my aunts took extreme care, were a revenue, with little capital. The oil of our fresh walnuts had flavour and smell, which we liked better than those of the oil-olive, and our cakes of buck-wheat, hot, with the sweet butter of Mont Dor, were for us the most inviting of feasts. By the fire-side, in the evening, while we heard the pot boiling with sweet chest-nuts in it, our grandmother would roast a quince under the ashes and divide it among us children. The most sober of women made us all gourmands. Thus, in a household, where nothing was ever lost, very little expense supplied all our further wants; the dead wood of the neighbouring forests was in abundance, the fresh mountain butter and most delicate cheese cost little; even wine was not dear, and my father used it soberly."

That is as much, I suppose, as you will care for at once. Insipid enough, you think?—or perhaps, in one way, too sapid; one's soul and affections mixed up so curiously with quince-marmalade? It is true, the French have a trick of doing that; but why not take it the other way, and say, one's quince-marmalade mixed up with affection? We adulterate our affections in England, now-

a-days, with a yellower, harder, baser thing than that ; and there would surely be no harm in our confectioners putting a little soul into their sugar,—if they put in nothing worse ?

But as to the simplicity—or, shall we say, wateriness,—of the style, I can answer you more confidently. *Milkiness* would be a better word, only one does not use it of styles. This writing of *Marmontel's* is different from the writing you are accustomed to, in that there is never an exaggerating phrase in it—never a needlessly strained or metaphorical word, and never a misapplied one. Nothing is said pithily to show the author's power, diffusely, to show his observation, nor quaintly, to show his fancy. He is not thinking of himself as an author at all ; but of himself as a boy. He is not remembering his native valley as a subject for fine writing, but as a beloved real place, about which he may be garrulous, perhaps, but not rhetorical. But *is* it, or was it, or could it ever be, a real place, indeed?—you will ask next. Yes, real in the severest sense ; with realities that are to last for ever, when this London and Manchester life of yours shall have become a horrible, and, but on evidence, incredible, romance of the past.

Real, but only partially seen ; still more partially told. The rightnesses only perceived ; the felicities only remembered ; the landscape seen as if spring lasted always : the trees in blossom or fruitage evermore : no shedding of leaf : of winter, nothing remembered but its fireside.

Yet not untrue. The landscape is indeed there, and the life, seen through glass that dims them, but not distorts; and which is only dim to Evil.

But now supply, with your own undimmed insight, and better knowledge of human nature; or invent, with imaginative malice, what evil you think necessary to make the picture true. Still—make the worst of it you will—it cannot but remain somewhat incredible to you, like the pastoral scene in a pantomime, more than a piece of history.

Well; but the pastoral scene in a pantomime itself,—tell me,—is it meant to be a bright or a gloomy part of your Christmas spectacle? Do you mean it to exhibit, by contrast, the blessedness of your own life, in the streets outside; or, for one fond and foolish half hour, to recall the “ravishing picture” of days long lost. “The sheepfold of St. Thomas,” (you have at least, in him, an incredulous saint, and fit patron of a Republic at once holy and enlightened,) the green island full of singing birds, the cascade in the forest, the vines on the steep river-shore;—the little Marmontel reading his Virgil in the shade, with murmur of bees round him in the sunshine;—the fair-haired comrade, so gentle, so reasonable, and, marvel of marvels, beloved for being exemplary! Is all this incredible to you in its good, or in its evil? These children rolling on the heaps of black and sliny ground, mixed with brickbats and broken plates and bottles, in the midst of Preston or Wigan, as edified travellers be-

hold them when the station is blocked, and the train stops anywhere outside,—the children themselves, black, and in rags evermore, and the only water near them either boiling, or gathered in unctuous pools, covered with rancid clots of scum, in the lowest holes of the earth-heaps,—why do you not paint these for pastime? Are they not what your machine gods have produced for you? The mighty iron arms are visibly there at work;—no St. Thomas can be incredulous about the existence of gods such as they,—day and night at work—omnipotent, if not resplendent. Why do you not rejoice in these; appoint a new Christmas for these, in memory of the Nativity of Boilers, and put their realms of black bliss into new Arcadias of pantomime—the harlequin, mask all over? Tell me, my practical friends.

Believe me, faithfully yours,

JOHN RUSKIN.

FORS CLAVIGERA

LETTERS

**TO THE WORKMEN AND LABOURERS OF
GREAT BRITAIN.**

By JOHN RUSKIN, LL.D

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LETTER XV.

DENMARK HILL,

1st March, 1872.

MY FRIENDS,

THE Tory gentleman whose character I have to sketch for you, in due counterbalance of that story of republican injustice in California, was, as I told you, the friend of Friedrich II. of Germany, another great Friedrich preceding the Prussian one by some centuries, and living quite as hard a life of it. But before I can explain to you anything either about him, or his friend, I must develop the statement made above (XI. 8), of the complex modes of injustice respecting the means of maintenance, which have hitherto held in all ages among the three great classes of soldiers, clergy, and peasants. I mean, by 'peasants' the producers of food, out of land or water; by 'clergy,' men who live by teaching or exhibition of behaviour; and by 'soldiers,' those who live by fighting, either by robbing wise peasants, or getting themselves paid by foolish ones. Into these three classes the world's multitudes are essentially hitherto divided. The legitimate merchant of course exists, and can exist, only on the small percentage of pay obtainable for the transfer of goods; and the manufacturer and artist are, in healthy society, developed states of the peasant. The morbid

power of manufacture and commerce in our own age is an accidental condition of national decrepitude ; the injustices connected with it are mainly those of the gambling-house, and quite unworthy of analytical inquiry ; but the unjust relations of the soldier, clergyman, and peasant have hitherto been constant in all great nations ; they are full of mystery and beauty in their iniquity ;—they require the most subtle, and deserve the most reverent, analysis.

The first root of distinction between the soldier and peasant is in barrenness and fruitfulness of possessed ground ; the inhabitant of sands and rocks “redeeming his share” (see speech of Roderick in the *Lady of the Lake*) from the inhabitant of corn-bearing ground. The second root of it is delight in athletic exercise, resulting in beauty of person and perfectness of race, and causing men to be content, or even triumphant, in accepting continual risk of death, if by such risk they can escape the injury of servile toil.

Again, the first root of distinction between clergyman and peasant is the greater intelligence, which instinctively desires both to learn and teach, and is content to accept the smallest maintenance, if it may remain so occupied. (Look back to Marmontel’s account of his tutor.)

The second root of distinction is that which gives rise to the word ‘clergy,’ properly signifying persons chosen by lot, or in a manner elect, for the practice and exhibition of good behaviour ; the visionary or passionate

anchorite being content to beg his bread, so only that he may have leave by undisturbed prayer, or meditation, to bring himself into closer union with the spiritual world ; and the peasant being always content to feed him, on condition of his becoming venerable in that higher state, and, as a peculiarly blessed person, a communicator of blessing.

Now, both these classes of men remain noble, as long as they are content with daily bread, if they may be allowed to live in their own way ; but the moment the one of them uses his strength, and the other his sanctity, to get riches with, or pride of elevation over other men, both of them become tyrants, and capable of any degree of evil. Of the clerk's relation to the peasant, I will only tell you, now, that, as you learn more of the history of Germany and Italy, in the Middle Ages, and, indeed, almost to this day, you will find the soldiers of Germany are always trying to get mastery over the body of Italy, and the clerks of Italy are always trying to get mastery over the mind of Germany ;—this main struggle between Emperor and Pope, as the respective heads of the two parties, absorbing in its vortex, or attracting to its standards, all the minor disorders and dignities of war ; and quartering itself in a quaintly heraldic fashion with the methods of encroachment on the peasant, separately invented by baron and priest.

The relation of the baron to the peasant, however, is all that I can touch upon to-day ; and first, note 'bat this

word, 'baron' is the purest English you can use to denote the soldier, soldato, or 'fighter, hired with pence, or soldi, as such. Originally it meant the servant of a soldier, or as a Roman clerk of Nero's time* tells us, (the literary antipathy thus early developing itself in its future nest), "the extreme fool, who is a fool's servant;" but soon it came to be associated with a Greek word meaning "heavy;" and so got to signify heavy-handed, or heavy-armed, or generally prevailing in manhood. For some time it was used to signify the authority of a husband; a woman called herself her husband's† 'ancilla,' (hand-maid), and him her 'baron.' Finally the word got settled in the meaning of a strong fighter receiving regular pay. "Mercenaries are persons who serve for a regularly received pay; the same are called 'Barones' from the Greek, because they are strong in labours." This is the definition given by an excellent clerk of the seventh century, Isidore, Bishop of Seville, and I wish you to recollect it, because it perfectly unites the economical idea of a Baron, as a person paid for fighting, with the physical idea of one, as prevailing in battle by weight, not without some attached idea of slight stupidity;—the notion holding so distinctly even to this day that Mr. Matthew Arnold thinks the entire class aptly describable under the term "barbarians."

* Cornutus, quoted by Ducange under the word "Baro."

† I am told in the north such pleasant fiction still holds in the Teesdale district; the wife calling her husband 'my master-man.'

At all events, the word is the best general one for the dominant rank of the Middle Ages, as distinguished from the pacific peasant, and so delighting in battle that one of the most courteous barons of the fourteenth century tells a young knight who comes to him for general advice, that the moment war fails in any country, he must go into another.

“Et se la guerre est faillie,
Départie
Fay tóst de cellui país ;
N’arresté quoy que nul die.

“And if the war has ended,
Departure
Make quickly from that country,
Do not stop, whatever anybody says to you.” *

But long before this class distinction was clearly established, the more radical one between pacific and warrior nations had shown itself cruelly in the history of Europe.

You will find it greatly useful to fix in your minds these following elementary ideas of that history:—

The Roman Empire was already in decline at the birth of Christ. It was ended five hundred years afterwards. The wrecks of its civilization, mingled with the broken fury of the tribes which had destroyed it, were then gradually softened and purged by Christianity; and hammered into shape by three great warrior nations, on the north, south and west, worshippers of the storms, of the sun, and

* *The Book of a Hundred Ballads.* You shall hear more of them, soon.

of fate. Three Christ'an kings, Henry the Fowler in Germany, Charlemagne in France, and Alfred in England, typically represent the justice of humanity, gradually forming the feudal system out of the ruined elements of Roman luxury and law, under the disciplining torment inflicted by the mountaineers, of Scandinavia, India, and Arabia.

This forging process takes another five hundred years. Christian feudalism may be considered as definitely organized at the end of the tenth century, and its political strength established, having for the most part absorbed the soldiers of the north, and soon to be aggressive on those of Mount Imaus and Mount Sinai. It lasts another five hundred years, and then our own epoch, that of atheistic liberalism, begins, practically necessitated,—the liberalism by the two discoveries of gunpowder and printing,—and the atheism by the unfortunate persistence of the clerks in teaching children what they cannot understand, and employing young consecrated persons to assert in pulpits what they do not know.

That is enough generalization for you to-day. I want now to fix your thoughts on one small point in all this;—the effect of the discovery of gunpowder in promoting liberalism.

Its first operation was to destroy the power of the baron, by rendering it impossible for him to hold his castle, with a few men, against a mob. The fall of the Bastile, is a typical fact in history of this kind; but, of course long

previously, castellated architecture had been felt to be useless. Much other building of a noble kind vanishes together with it; nor less (which is a much greater loss than the building,) the baronial habit of living in the country.

Next to his castle, the baron's armour becomes useless to him; and all the noble habits of life vanish which depend on the wearing of a distinctive dress, involving the constant exercise of accurately disciplined strength, and the public assertion of an exclusive occupation in life, involving exposure to danger.

Next, the baron's sword and spear become useless to him; and encounter, no longer the determination of who is best man, but of who is best marksman, which is a very different question indeed.

Lastly, the baron being no more able to maintain his authority by force, seeks to keep it by form; he reduces his own subordinates to a fine machinery, and obtains the command of it by purchase or intrigue. The necessity of distinction of character is in war so absolute, and the tests of it are so many, that, in spite of every abuse, good officers get sometimes the command of squadrons or of ships; and one good officer in a hundred is enough to save the honour of an army, and the credit of a system: but generally speaking, our officers at this day do not know their business; and the result is—that, paying thirty millions a year for our army, we are informed by Mr. Grant Duff that the army we have bought is of no use, and we must

pay still more money to produce any effect upon foreign affairs. So, you see, this is the actual state of things,—and it is the perfection of liberalism,—that first we cannot buy a Raphael for five and twenty pounds, because we have to pay five hundred for a pocket pistol; and next, we are coolly told that the pistol won't go off, and that we must still pay foreign constables to keep the peace.

In old times, under the pure baronial power, things used, as I told you, to be differently managed by us. We were, all of us, in some sense barons; and paid *ourselves* for fighting. We had no pocket pistols, nor Woolwich Infants—nothing but bows and spears, good horses, (I hear after two-thirds of our existing barons have ruined their youth in horse-racing, and a good many of them their fortunes also, we are now in irremediable want of horses for our cavalry), and bright armour. Its brightness, observe, was an essential matter with us. Last autumn I saw, even in modern England, something bright; low sunshine at six o'clock of an October morning, glancing down a long bank of fern covered with hoar frost, in Yewdale, at the head of Coniston Water. I noted it as more beautiful than anything I had ever seen, to my remembrance, in gladness and infinitude of light. Now, Scott uses this very image to describe the look of the chain-mail of a soldier in one of these free* companies;

* This singular use of the word "free" in baronial times, corresponding to our present singular use of it respecting trade, we will examine

—Le Balafre, Quentin Durward's uncle :—"The archer's gorget, arm-pieces, and gauntlets were of the finest steel, curiously inlaid with silver, and his hauberk, or shirt of mail, was as clear and bright as the frost-work of a winter morning upon fern or briar." And Sir John Hawkwood's men, of whose proceedings in Italy I have now to give you some account, were named throughout Italy, as I told you in my first letter, the White Company of English, 'Societas alba Anglicorum,' or generally, the Great White Company, merely from the splendour of their arms. They crossed the Alps in 1361, and immediately caused a curious change in the Italian language. Azario lays "great stress on their tall spears with a very long iron point at the extremity; this formidable weapon being for the most part wielded by two, and sometimes moreover by three individuals, being so heavy and huge, that whatever it came in contact with was pierced thro' and thro'." He says, that* "at their backs the mounted bowmen carried their bows; whilst those used by the infantry archers were so enormous that the long arrows discharged from them were shot with one end of the bow resting on the ground instead of being drawn in the air."

in due time. A soldier who fights only for his own hand, and a merchant who sells only for his own hand are, of course, in reality, equally the slaves of the persons who employ them. Only the soldier is truly free, and only the merchants, who fight and sell as their country needs, and bids them.

* I always give Mr. Rawdon Brown's translation from his work, *The English in Italy*, already quoted.

Of the English bow you have probably heard before, though I shall have, both of it, and the much inferior Greek bow made of two goats' horns, to tell you some things that may not have come in your way; but the change these English caused in the Italian language, and afterwards generally in that of chivalry, was by their use of the spear; for "Filippo Villani tells us that whereas, 'until the English company crossed the Alps, his countrymen numbered their military forces by 'helmets' and colour companies, (bandiere); thenceforth armies were reckoned by the *spear*, a weapon which, when handled by the White Company, proved no less tremendous than the English bayonet of modern times."

It is worth noting as one of the tricks of the third *Fors*—the giver of names as well as fortunes—that the name of the chief poet of passionate Italy should have been 'the bearer of the wing,' and that of the chief poet of practical England, the bearer or shaker of the spear. Noteworthy also that Shakespeare himself gives a name to his type of the false soldier from the pistol; but, in the future doubtless we shall have a hero of culminating soldierly courage named from the torpedo, and a poet of the commercial period, singing the wars directed by Mr. Grant Duff, named Shake-purse.

The White Company when they crossed the Alps were under a German captain. (Some years before, an entirely German troop was prettily defeated by the Apennine peasants.) Sir John Hawkwood did not take the

command until 1364, when the Pisans hired the company, five thousand strong, at the rate of a hundred and fifty thousand golden florins for six months. I think about fifty thousand pounds of our money a month, or ten pounds a man—Sir John himself being then described as a “great general,” an Englishman of a vulpine nature, “and astute in *their* fashion.” This English fashion of astuteness means, I am happy to say, that Sir John saw far, planned deeply, and was cunning in military stratagem; but would neither poison his enemies nor sell his friends—the two words of course being always understood as for the time being;—for, from this year 1364 for thirty years onward, he leads his gradually more and more powerful soldier’s life, fighting first for one town and then for another; here for bishops, and there for barons, but mainly for those merchants of Florence, from whom that narrow street in your city is named Lombard Street, and interfering thus so decidedly with foreign affairs, that, at the end of the thirty years, when he put off his armour, and had lain resting for a little while in Florence Cathedral, King Richard the Second begged his body from the Florentines, and laid it in his own land; the Florentines granting it in the terms of this following letter:—

“TO THE KING OF ENGLAND.

“Most serene and invincible Sovereign, most dread Lord,
and our very especial Benefactor—

“Our devotion can deny nothing to your Highness’

Eminence: there is nothing in our power which he would not strive by all means to accomplish, should it prove grateful to you.

“Wherefore, although we should consider it glorious for us and our people to possess the dust and ashes of the late valiant knight, nay, most renowned captain, Sir John Hawkwood, who fought most gloriously for us, as the commander of our armies, and whom at the public expense we caused to be entombed in the Cathedral Church of our city; yet, notwithstanding, according to the form of the demand, that his remains may be taken back to his country, we freely concede the permission, lest it be said that your sublimity asked anything in vain, or fruitlessly, of our reverential humility.

“We, however, with due deference, and all possible earnestness, recommend to your Highness’ graciousness, the son and posterity of said Sir John, who acquired no mean repute, and glory for the English name in Italy, as also our merchants and citizens.”

It chanced by the appointment of the third *Fors*,* to which, you know, I am bound in these letters uncomplainingly to submit, that, just as I had looked out this letter for you, given at Florence in the year 1396, I found in an old book-shop two gazettes, nearly three hundred years later, namely, Number 20 of the *Mercurius Publicus*, and

* Remember, briefly always, till I can tell you more about it, that the first *Fors* is *Courage*, the second, *Patience*, the third, *Fortune*.

Number 50 of the *Parliamentary Intelligencer*, the latter comprising the same "foreign intelligence, with the affairs now in agitation in England, Scotland, and Ireland, for information of the people. Publish'd by order, from Monday, December 3rd, to Monday, December 10th, 1660." This little gazette informs us in its first advertisement, that in London, November 30th, 1660, was lost, in or about this city, a small paper book of accounts and receipts, with a red leather cover, with two clasps on it; and that anybody that can give intelligence of it to the city crier at Bread Street end in Cheapside, "shall have five shillings for their pains, and more if they desire it." And its last paragraph is as follows:—"On Saturday (December 8), the Most Honourable House of Peers concurred with the Commons in the order for the digging up the carcases of Oliver Cromwel, Henry Ireton, John Bradshaw, and Thomas Pride, and carrying them on an Hurdle to Tyburn, where they are to be first hang'd up in their Coffins, and then buried under the Gallows."

The *Public Mercury* is of date Thursday, June 14th, to Thursday, June 21st, 1660, and contains a report of the proceedings at the House of Commons, on Saturday, the 16th, of which the first sentence is:—

"RESOLVED,—That his Majesty be humbly moved to call in Milton's two books, and John Goodwin's, and order them to be burnt by the common hangman."

By the final appointment of the third *Fors*, I chanced

just after finding these gazettes, to come upon the following passage in my *Daily Telegraph* :—

“Every head was uncovered, and although among those who were farthest off there was a pressing forward and a straining to catch sight of the coffin, there was nothing unseemly or rude. The Catafalque was received at the top of the stairs by Col. Braine and other officers of the 9th, and placed in the centre of the vestibule on a rich velvet pall on which rested crowns, crosses, and other devices, composed of tuberoses and camellias, while beautiful lilies were scattered over the corpse, which was clothed in full regimentals, the cap and sword resting on the body. The face, with the exception of its pallor, was unchanged, and no one, unless knowing the circumstances, would have believed that Fiske had died a violent death. The body was contained in a handsome rosewood casket, with gold-plated handles, and a splendid plate bearing the inscription, ‘James Fiske, jun., died January 7th, 1872, in the 37th year of his age.’”

In the foregoing passages, you see, there is authentic account given you of the various honours rendered by the enlightened public of the fourteenth, seventeenth, and nineteenth centuries to the hero of their day or hour; the persons thus revered in their burial, or unburial, being all, by profession, soldiers; and holding rank in that profession, very properly describable by the pretty modern

English word "Colonel"—leader, that is to say, of a Coronel, Coronella, or daisy-like circlet of men; as in the last case of the three before us, of the Tammany "Ring."

You are to observe, however, that the first of the three, Colonel Sir John Hawkwood, is a soldier both in heart and deed, every inch of him; and that the second, Colonel Oliver Cromwell, was a soldier in deed, but not in heart; being by natural disposition and temper fitted rather for a Huntingdonshire farmer, and not at all caring to make any money by his military business; and finally, that Colonel James Fiske, jun., was a soldier in heart, to the extent of being willing to receive any quantity of soldi from any paymaster, but no more a soldier in deed than you are yourselves, when you go piping and drumming past my gate at Denmark Hill (I should rather say—banging, than drumming, for I observe you hit equally hard and straightforward to every tune; so that from a distance it sounds just like beating carpets), under the impression that you are defending your country as well as amusing yourselves.

Of the various honours, deserved or undeserved, done by enlightened public opinion to these three soldiers, I leave you to consider till next month, merely adding, to put you more entirely in command of the facts, that Sir John Hawkwood, (*Acuto*, the Italians called him, by happy adaptation of syllables), whose entire subsistence was one of systematic military robbery, had, when he was first buried, the honour, rarely granted even to the citizens of

Florence, of having his coffin laid on the font of the House of his name-saint, St. John Baptist—that same font which Dante was accused of having impiously broken to save a child from drowning, in “mio bel San Giovanni.” I am soon going to Florence myself to draw this beautiful San Giovanni for the beginning of my lectures on Architecture, at Oxford; and you shall have a print of the best sketch I can make, to assist your meditations on the honours of soldiership, and efficacy of baptism. Meantime, let me ask you to read an account of one funeral more, and to meditate also on that. It is given in the most exquisite and finished piece which I know of English Prose literature in the eighteenth century; and, however often you may have seen it already, I beg of you to read it now, both in connection with the funeral ceremonies described hitherto, and for the sake of its educational effect on your own taste in writing:—

“We last night received a piece of ill news at our club, which very sensibly afflicted every one of us. I question not but my readers themselves will be troubled at the hearing of it. To keep them no longer in suspense, Sir Roger de Coverley is dead. He departed this life at his house in the country, after a few weeks sickness. Sir Andrew Freeport has a letter from one of his correspondents in those parts, that informs him the old man caught a cold at the county-sessions, as he was very warmly promoting an address of his own penning, in which he suc

ceeded according to his wishes. But this particular comes from a whig justice of peace, who was always Sir Roger's enemy and antagonist. I have letters both from the chaplain and captain Sentry, which mention nothing of it, but are filled with many particulars to the honour of the good old man. I have likewise a letter from the butler, who took so much care of me last summer when I was at the knight's house. As my friend the butler mentions, in the simplicity of his heart, several circumstances the others have passed over in silence, I shall give my reader a copy of his letter, without any alteration or diminution.

“‘HONOURED SIR,— Knowing that you was my old master's good friend, I could not forbear sending you the melancholy news of his death, which has afflicted the whole country, as well as his poor servants, who loved him, I may say, better than we did our lives. I am afraid he caught his death the last county-sessions, where he would go to see justice done to a poor widow woman, and her fatherless children, that had been wronged by a neighbouring gentleman; for you know, Sir, my good master was always the poor man's friend. Upon his coming home, the first complaint he made was, that he had lost his roast-beef stomach, not being able to touch a sirloin, which was served up according to custom: and you know he used to take great delight in it. From that time forward he grew worse and worse, but still kept a good heart to the last. Indeed we were once in great

hope of his recovery, upon a kind message that was sent him from the widow lady whom he had made love to the forty last years of his life ; but this only proved a lighting before death. He has bequeathed to this lady, as a token of his love, a great pearl necklace, and a couple of silver bracelets set with jewels, which belonged to my good old lady his mother. He has bequeathed the fine white gelding that he used to ride a hunting upon, to his chaplain, because he thought he would be kind to him, and has left you all his books. He has moreover bequeathed to the chaplain a very pretty tenement with good lands about it. It being a very cold day when he made his will, he left for mourning to every man in the parish, a great frize-coat, and to every woman a black riding-hood. It was a most moving sight to see him take leave of his poor servants, commending us all for our fidelity, whilst we were not able to speak a word for weeping. As we most of us are grown grey-headed in our dear master's service, he has left us pensions and legacies, which we may live very comfortably upon the remaining part of our days. He has bequeathed a great deal more in charity, which is not yet come to my knowledge, and it is peremptorily said in the parish, that he has left money to build a steeple to the church ; for he was heard to say some time ago, that if he lived two years longer, Coverley church should have a steeple to it. The chaplain tells everybody that he made a very good end, and never speaks of him without tears. He was buried,

according to his own directions, among the family of the Coverleys, on the left hand of his father Sir Arthur. The coffin was carried by six of his tenants, and the pall held up by six of the quorum. The whole parish followed the corpse with heavy hearts, and in their mourning suits; the men in frize, and the women in riding-hoods. Captain Sentry, my master's nephew, has taken possession of the Hall-house, and the whole estate. When my old master saw him a little before his death, he shook him by the hand, and wished him joy of the estate which was falling to him, desiring him only to make a good use of it, and to pay the several legacies, and the gifts of charity, which he told him he had left as quit-rents upon the estate. The captain truly seems a courteous man, though he says but little. He makes much of those whom my master loved, and shews great kindness to the old house-dog, that you know my poor master was so fond of. It would have gone to your heart to have heard the moans the dumb creature made on the day of my master's death. He has never joyed himself since; no more has any of us. It was the melancholiest day for the poor people that ever happened in Worcestershire. This is all from,

“Honoured Sir,

“Your most sorrowful servant,

“EDWARD BISCUIT.

“P.S. My master desired, some weeks before he died, that a book, which comes up to you by the carrier, should be given to Sir Andrew Freeport in his name.’

“ This letter, notwithstanding the poor butler’s manner of writing it, gave us such an idea of our good old friend, that upon the reading of it there was not a dry eye in the club. Sir Andrew opening the book, found it to be a collection of acts of parliament. There was in particular the Act of Uniformity, with some passages in it marked by Sir Roger’s own hand. Sir Andrew found that they related to two or three points which he had disputed with Sir Roger the last time he appeared at the club. Sir Andrew, who would have been merry at such an incident on another occasion, at the sight of the old man’s handwriting burst into tears, and put the book into his pocket. Captain Sentry informs me that the knight has left rings and mourning for every one in the club.”

I am obliged to give you this ideal of Addison’s because I can neither from my own knowledge, nor, at this moment, out of any domestic chronicles I remember, give you so perfect an account of the funeral of an English squire who has lived an honourable life in peace. But Addison is as true as truth itself. So now, meditate over these four funerals, and the meaning and accuracy of the public opinions they express, till I can write again.

And believe me, ever faithfully yours,

JOHN RUSKIN.

LETTER XVI.

MY FRIENDS,

DENMARK HILL,
15th March, 1872.

THE meditation I asked you to give to the facts put before you in my last letter, if given, should have convinced you, for one thing, quite sufficiently for all your future needs, of the unimportance of momentary public opinion respecting the characters of men ; and for another thing, of the preciousness of confirmed public opinion, when it happens to be right ;—preciousness both to the person opined of, and the opiners ;—as, for instance, to Sir Roger de Coverley, the opinion formed of him by his tenants and club : and for third thing, it might have properly led you to consider, though it was scarcely probable your thoughts should have turned that way, what an evil trick of human creatures it was to reserve the expression of these opinions—or even the examination of them, until the persons to be opined of are dead ; and then to endeavour to put all right by setting their coffins on baptistery fonts—or hanging them up at Tyburn. Let me very strongly advise you to make up your minds concerning people, while they are with you ; to honour and obey those whom you consider good ones ; to dishonour and disobey those whom you consider bad ones ; and when good and bad ones die, to make no violent or expressive

demonstrations of the feelings which have now become entirely useless to the persons concerned, and are only, as they are true or false, serviceable, or the contrary, to yourselves; but to take care that some memorial is kept of men who deserve memory, in a distinct statement on the stone or brass of their tombs, either that they were true men, or rascals,—wise men, or fools.

How beautiful the variety of sepulchral architecture might be, in any extensive place of burial, if the public would meet the small expense of thus expressing its opinions, in a verily instructive manner; and if some of the tombstones accordingly terminated in fools' caps; and others, instead of crosses or cherubs, bore engravings of cats-of-nine-tails, as typical of the probable methods of entertainment, in the next world, of the persons, not, it is to be hoped, reposing, below.

But the particular subject led up to in my last letter, and which, in this special month of April, I think it appropriate for you to take to heart, is the way in which you spend your money, or allow it to be spent for you. Colonel Hawwood and Colonel Fiske both passed their whole lives in getting possession, by various means, of other people's money; (in the final fact, of working-men's money,—yours, that is to say), and everybody praises and crowns them for doing so. Colonel Cromwell passes his life in fighting for, what in the gist of it meant, not freedom, but freedom from unjust taxation;—and you hang his coffin up at Tyburn.

"Not Freedom, but deliverance from unjust taxation." You call me unpractical. Suppose you became practical enough yourselves to take that for a watchword for a little while, and see how near you can come to its realization.

For, I very positively can inform you, the consideration of the misery of the world comes of the tricks of unjust taxation. All its evil passions—pride, lust, revenge, malice, and sloth, derive their main deadliness from the facilities of getting hold of other people's money open to the persons they influence. Pay every man for his work,—pay nobody *but* for his work,—and see that the work be sound ; and you will find pride, lust, and sloth have little room left for themselves.

Observe, however, very carefully, that by unjust taxation, I do not mean merely Chancellor of Exchequer's business, but a great part of what really very wise and worthy gentlemen, but, unfortunately, proud also, suppose to be their business.

For instance, before beginning my letter to you this morning, (the last I shall ever date from Denmark Hill,*)

* Between May and October, any letters meant for me should be addressed to Brantwood, Coniston ; between October and May, to Corpus Christi College, Oxford. They must be very short, and very plainly written, or they will not be read ; and they need never ask me to do anything, because I won't do it. And, in general, I cannot answer letters ; but for any that come to help me, the writers may be sure that I am grateful. I get a great many from people who " know that I must be good-natured," from my books. I *was* good-natured once ; but I beg to state, in the most positive terms, that I am now old, tired, and very ill-natured.

I put out of my sight, carefully, under a large book, a legal document, which disturbed me by its barbarous black lettering. This is an R



in it, for instance, which is ugly enough, as such, but how ugly in the significance of it, and reasons of its being written that way, instead of in a properly intelligible way, there is hardly vituperation enough in language justly to express to you. This said document is to release the sole remaining executor of my father's will from further responsibility for the execution of it. And all that there is really need for, of English scripture on the occasion, would be as follows:—

I, having received this 15th of March, 1822, from A. B., Esq., all the property which my father left, hereby release A. B., Esq., from future responsibility, respecting either my father's property, or mine, or my father's business, or mine. Signed, J. R., before such and such two witnesses.

This document, on properly cured calf-skin, (not cleaned by acids), and written as plainly as, after having contracted some careless literary habits, I could manage to write it, ought to answer the purpose required, before any court of law on earth.

In order to effect it in a manner pleasing to the present

legal mind of England, I receive eighty-seven lines of close writing, containing from fourteen to sixteen words each, (one thousand two hundred and eighteen words in all, at the minimum); thirteen of them in black letters of the lovely kind above imitated, but produced with much pains by the scrivener. Of the manner in which this over-plus of one thousand two hundred and seventy-eight words is accomplished, (my suggested form containing forty only), the following example—the last clause of the document—may suffice.

“And the said J. R. doth hereby for himself his heirs executors and administrators covenant and agree with and to the said A. B. his executors and administrators that he the said J. R. his heirs executors administrators or assigns shall and will from time to time and at all times hereafter save harmless and keep indemnified the said A. B. his heirs executors administrators and assigns from and in respect of all claims and demands whatsoever which may be made upon him or them or any of them for or in respect of the real or personal estate of the said J. R. and from all suits costs charges and damages and expenses whatsoever which the said A. B. his heirs executors administrators or assigns shall be involved in or put unto for or in respect of the said real or personal estate or any part thereof.”

Now, what reason do you suppose there is for all this barbarism and bad grammar, and tax upon my eyes and time, for very often one has actually to read these things,

or hear them read, all through ? The reason is simply and wholly that I may be charged so much per word, that the lawyer and his clerk may live. But do you not see how infinitely advantageous it would be for me, (if only I could get the other sufferers under this black literature to be of my mind), to clap the lawyer and his clerk, once for all, fairly out of the way in a dignified almshouse, with parchment unlimited, and ink turned on at a tap, and maintenance for life, on the mere condition of their never troubling humanity more, with either their scriptures or opinions on any subject ; and to have this release of mine, as above worded, simply confirmed by the signature of any person whom the Queen might appoint for that purpose, (say the squire of the parish), and there an end ? How is it, do you think, that other sufferers under the black literature do *not* come to be of my mind, which was Cicero's mind also, and has been the mind of every sane person before Cicero and since Cicero,—so that we might indeed get it ended thus summarily ?

Well, at the root of all these follies and iniquities, there lies always one tacit, but infinitely strong persuasion in the British mind, namely, that somehow money grows out of nothing, if one can only find some expedient to produce an article that must be paid for. “ Here,” the practical Englishman says to himself, “ I produce, being capable of nothing better, an entirely worthless piece of parchment, with one thousand two hundred entirely foolish words upon it, written in an entirely abominable hand ;

and by this production of mine, I conjure out of the vacant air, the substance of ten pounds, or the like. What an infinitely profitable transaction to me and to the world! Creation, out of a chaos of words, and a dead beast's hide, of this beautiful and omnipotent ten pounds. Do I not see with my own eyes that this is very good?"

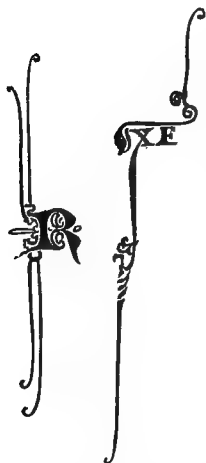
That is the real impression on the existing popular mind; silent, but deep, and for the present unconquerable. That by due parchment, calligraphy, and ingenious stratagem, money may be conjured out of the vacant air. Alchemy is, indeed, no longer included in our list of sciences, for alchemy proposed,—irrational science that it was,—to make money of *something*;—gold of lead, or the like. But to make money of *nothing*,—this appears to be manifoldly possible, to the modern Anglo-Saxon practical person,—instructed by Mr. John Stuart Mill. Sometimes, with rare intelligence, he is capable of carrying the inquiry one step farther. Pushed hard to assign a Providential cause for such legal documents as this we are talking of, an English gentleman would say: "Well, of course, where property needs legal forms to transfer it, it must be in quantity enough to bear a moderate tax without inconvenience; and this tax on its transfer enables many well-educated and agreeable persons to live."

Yes, that is so, and I (speaking for the nonce in the name of the working-man, maker of property) am willing enough to be taxed, straightforwardly, for the maintenance of these most agreeable persons; but not to be

taxed obliquely for it, nor teased either obliquely or otherwise, for it. I greatly and truly admire (as aforesaid, in my first letter), these educated persons in wigs ; and when I go into my kitchen-garden in spring time, to see the dew on my early sprouts, I often mentally acknowledge the fitness, yet singularity, of the arrangement by which I am appointed to grow mute Broccoli for the maintenance of that talking Broccoli. All that I want of it is to let itself be kept for a show, and not to tax my time as well as my money.

Kept for a show, of heads ; or, to some better purpose, for writing on fair parchment, with really well-trained hands, what might be desirable of literature. Suppose every existing lawyer's clerk was trained, in a good drawing-school, to write red and blue letters as well as black ones, in a loving and delicate manner ; here for instance is an R and a number eleven, which begin the eleventh chapter of Job in one of my thirteenth-century Bibles. There is as good a letter and as good a number—every one different in design, to every chapter, and beautifully gilded and painted ones to the beginnings of books ; all

done for love, and teasing nobody. Now suppose the lawyer's clerks, thus instructed to write decently, were ap



pointed to write for us, for their present pay, words really worth setting down—Nursery Songs, Grimm's Popular Stories, and the like, we should have again, not, perhaps, a cheap literature; but at least an innocent one. Dante's words might then be taken up literally, by relieved mankind. "Più ridon le carte." "The papers smile more," they might say, of such transfigured legal documents.

Not a cheap literature, even then; nor pleasing to my friend the *Glasgow Herald*, who writes to me indignantly, but very civilly, (and I am obliged to him), to declare that he is a Herald, and not a Chronicle. I am delighted to hear it; for my lectures on heraldry are just beginning at Oxford, and a Glaswegian opinion may be useful to me, when I am not sure of my blazon. Also he tells me good leather may be had in Glasgow. Let Glasgow flourish, and I will assuredly make trial of the same: but touching this cheap literature question, I cannot speak much in this letter, for I must keep to our especial subject of April—this Fools' Paradise of Cloud-begotten Gold.

Cloud-begotten—and self-begotten—as some would have it. But it is not so, friends.

Do you remember the questioning to Job? The pretty letter R stopped me just now at the Response of Zophar; but look on to the thirty-eighth chapter, and read down to the question concerning this April time?—"Hath the rain a father—and who hath begotten the drops of dew,—the hoary Frost of Heaven—who hath gendered it?"

That rain and frost of heaven; and the earth which they loose and bind: these, and the labour of your hands to divide them, and subdue, are your wealth, for ever—un-increasable. The fruit of Earth, and its waters, and its light—such as the strength of the pure rock can grow—such as the unthwarted sun in his season brings—these are your inheritance. You can diminish it, but cannot increase: that your barns should be filled with plenty—your presses burst with new wine, is your blessing; and every year—when it is full—it must be new; and every year, no more.

And this money, which you think so multipliable, is only to be increased in the hands of some, by the loss of others. The sum of it, in the end, represents, and *can* represent, only what is in the barn and winepress. It may represent less, but cannot more.

These ten pounds, for instance, which I am grumbling at having to pay my lawyer—what are they? whence came they?

They were once, (and could be nothing now, unless they had been) so many skins of Xeres wine—grown and mel-
lowed by pure chalk rock and unafflicted sunshine. Wine drunk, indeed, long ago—but the drinkers gave the vine-
yard dressers these tokens, which we call pounds, signify-
ing, that having had so much good from them they would
return them as much, in future time. And, indeed, for
my ten pounds, if my lawyer didn't take it, I could still
get my Xeres, if Xeres wine exists anywhere. But, if

not, what matters it how many pounds I have, or think I have, or you either? It is meat and drink we want—not pounds.

As you are beginning to discover—I fancy too many of you, in this rich country. If you only would discover it a little faster, and demand dinners, instead of Liberty? For what possible liberty do you want, which does not depend on dinner? Tell me, once for all, what is it you want to do, that you can't do? Dinner being provided, do you think the Queen will interfere with the way you choose to spend your afternoons, if only you knock nobody down, and break nobody's windows? But the need of dinner enslaves you to purpose?

On reading the letter spoken of in my last correspondence sheet, I find that it represents this modern form of slavery with an unconscious clearness, which is very interesting. I have, therefore, requested the writer's permission to print it, and, with a passage or two omitted, and briefest comment, here it is in full type, for it is worth careful reading:—

“SIR,

Glasgow, 12th February, 1872.

“You say in your *Fors* that you do not want any one to buy your books who will not give a ‘doctor’s fee’ per volume, which you rate at 10s. 6d.; now, as the *Herald* remarks, you are clearly placing yourself in a wrong position, as you arbitrarily fix *your* doctor’s fee far too high; indeed, while you express a desire, no doubt

quite sincerely, to elevate the working-man, morally, mentally, and physically, you in the meantime absolutely preclude him from purchasing your books at all, and so almost completely bar his way from the enjoyment and elevating influence of perhaps the most" [&c., complimentary terms—omitted].

"Permit me a personal remark:—I am myself a poorly paid clerk, with a salary not much over the income-tax minimum; now no doctor, here at least, would ever think of charging me a fee of 10*s.* 6*d.*, and so you see it is as much out of my power to purchase your books as any working-man. While Mr. Carlyle is just now issuing a cheap edition of his Works at 2*s.* per volume, which I can purchase, here, quite easily for 1*s.* 6*d.*;" [Presumably, therefore, to be had, as far north as Inverness, for a shilling, and for sixpence in Orkney], "I must say it is a great pity that a Writer so much, and, in my poor opinion, justly, appreciated as yourself, should as it were inaugurate with your own hands a system which thoroughly barriers your productions from the great majority of the middle and working classes. I take leave, however, to remark that I by no means shut my eyes to the anomalies of the Bookselling Trade, but I can't see that it can be remedied by an Author becoming his own Bookseller, and, *at the same time*, putting an unusually high price on his books. Of course, I would like to see an Author remunerated as highly as possible for his labours." [You ought not to like any such thing: you ought to like an

author to get what he deserves, like other people, not more, nor less.] "I would also crave to remark, following up your unfortunate analogy of the doctor's fee, that doctors who have acquired, either professionally or otherwise, a competence, often, nay very often, give their advice gratis to nearly every class, except that which is really wealthy; at least, I speak from my own experience, having known, nay even been attended by such a benevolent physician in a little town in Kirkcudbrightshire, who, when offered payment, and I was both quite able and willing to do so, and he was in no way indebted or obliged to me or mine, positively declined to receive any fee. So much for the benevolent physician and his fees.

"Here am I, possessed of a passionate love of nature in all her aspects, cooped up in this fearfully crammed mass of population, with its filthy Clyde, which would naturally have been a noble river, but, under the curse of our much belauded civilization, forsooth, turned into an almost stagnant loathsome ditch, pestilence-breathing, belorded over by hundreds upon hundreds of tall brick chimney-stacks vomiting up smoke unceasingly; and from the way I am situated, there are only one day and a half in the week in which I can manage a walk into the country; now, if I wished to foster my taste for the beautiful in nature and art, even while living a life of almost servile red-taped routine beneath the too frequently horror-breathing atmosphere of a huge over-grown plutocratic city like Glasgow, I cannot have your Works"

[complimentary terms again] "as, after providing for my necessities, I cannot indulge in Books at 10s. 6d. a volume. Of course, as you may say" [My dear sir, the very last thing I should say], "I can get them from a library. Assuredly, but one (at least I would) wishes to have actual and ever-present possession of productions such as yours" [more compliments]. "You will be aware, no doubt, that 'Geo. Eliot' has adopted a 'new system' in publishing her new novel by issuing it in 5s. 'parts,' with the laudable view of enabling and encouraging readers to buy the work for themselves, and not trusting to get it from 'some Mudie' or another for a week, then galloping through the three volumes and immediately forgetting the whole matter. When I possess a book worth having I always recur to it now and again. '*Your* new system,' however, tends to prevent the real reading public from ever possessing your books, and the wealthy classes who could afford to buy books at 10s. 6d. a volume, as a rule, I opine, don't drive themselves insane by much reading of any kind.

"I beg a last remark and I've done. Glasgow, for instance, has no splendid public buildings. She has increased in wealth till I believe there are some of the greatest merchants in the world trading in her Exchange; but except her grand old Cathedral, founded by an almost-forgotten bishop in the twelfth century, in what we in our vain folly are pleased to call the dark ages, when we ourselves are about as really dark as need be; having

no 'high calling' to strive for, except by hook or by crook to make money—a fortune—retire at thirty-five by some stroke of gambling of a highly questionable kind on the *Share* market or otherwise, to a suburban or country villa with Turkey carpets, a wine-cellar and a carriage and pair; as no man now-a-days is ever content with making a decent and honest *livelihood*. Truly a very 'high calling!' Our old Cathedral, thank God, was not built by contract or stock-jobbing: there was, surely, a higher calling of some sort in those quiet, old, unhurrying days. Our local plutocratic friends put their hands into their pockets to the extent of 150,000*l.* to help to build our new University buildings after a design by G. Gilbert Scott, which has turned out a very imposing pile of masonry; at least, it is placed on an imposing and magnificent site. I am no prophet, but I should not wonder if old St. Mungo's Cathedral, erected nearly six hundred years ago to the honour and glory of God, will be standing a noble ruin when our new spick-and-span College is a total wreck after all. Such being the difference between the work of really earnest God-fearing men, and that done by contract and Trades Unions. The Steam Engine, one of the demons of our mad, restless, headlong civilization, is screaming its unearthly whistle in the very quadrangles of the now deserted, but still venerable College buildings in our High Street, almost on the very spot where the philosophic Professors of that day, to their eternal honour, gave a harbourage to James Watt, when the

narrow-minded guild-brethren of Glasgow expelled him from their town as a stranger craftsman hailing from Greenock. Such is the irony of events! Excuse the presumption of this rather rambling letter, and apologizing for addressing you at such length,

“I am, very faithfully yours.”

I have only time, just now, to remark on this letter, first, that I don't believe any of Mr. Scott's work is badly done, or will come down soon; and that Trades Unions are quite right when honest and kind: but the frantic mistake of the Glaswegians, in thinking that they can import learning into their town safely in a Gothic case, and have 180,000 pounds' worth of it at command, while they have banished for ever from their eyes the sight of all that mankind have to learn anything *about*, is,—Well—as the rest of our enlightened public opinion. They might as well put a pyx into a pigsty, to make the pigs pious.

In the second place, as to my correspondent's wish to read my books, I am entirely pleased by it; but, putting the question of fee aside for the nonce, I am not in the least minded as matters stand, to prescribe my books for him. Nay, so far as in me lies, he shall neither read them, nor learn to trust in any such poor qualifications and partial comforts of the entirely wrong and dreadful condition of life he is in, with millions of others. If a child in a muddy ditch asked me for a picture-book, I should not give it him; but say, “Come out of that, first; or, if you

cannot, I must go and get help; but picture-books, there, you shall have none!"

Only a day and a half in the week on which one can get a walk into the country, (and how few have as much, or anything like it?) just bread enough earned to keep one alive, on those terms—one's daily work asking not so much as a lucifer match's worth of human intelligence;—unwholesome besides—one's chest, shoulders and stomach getting hourly more useless. Smoke above for sky; mud beneath for water; and the pleasant consciousness of spending one's weary life in the pure service of the devil! And the blacks are emancipated over the water there—and this is what you call "having your own way," *here*, is it?

Very solemnly, my good clerk-friend, there is something to be *done* in this matter; not merely to be read. Do you know any honest men who have a will of their own, among your neighbours? If none, set yourself to seek for such; if any, commune with them on this one subject, how a man may have sight of the Earth he was made of, and his bread out of the dust of it—and peace! And find out what it is that hinders you now from having these, and resolve that you will fight it, and put end to it. If you cannot find out for yourselves, tell me your difficulties, briefly, and I will deal with them for you, as the second *Fors* may teach me. Bring you the First with you, and the Third will help us

And believe me, faithfully yours,
JOHN RUSKIN.

LETTER XVII.

FLORENCE,

1st May, 1872.

MY FRIENDS,

HAVE you thought, as I prayed you to think, during the days of April, what things they are that will hinder you from being happy on this first of May? Be assured of it, you are meant, to-day, to be as happy as the birds, at least. If you are not, you, or somebody else, or something that you are one or other responsible for, is wrong; and your first business is to set yourself, them, or it, to rights. Of late you have made that your last business; you have thought things would right themselves, or that it was God's business to right them, not yours. Peremptorily it is yours. Not, observe, to get your rights, but to put things to rights. Some eleven in the dozen of the population of the world are occupied earnestly in putting things to wrongs, thinking to benefit themselves thereby. Is it any wonder, then, you are uncomfortable, when already the world, in our part of it, is over-populated, and eleven in the dozen of the over-population doing diligently wrong; and the remaining dozenth expecting God to do their work for them; and consoling themselves with buying two-shilling publications for eighteenpence!

To put things to rights! Do you not know how re

freshing it is, even to put one's room to rights, when it has got dusty and decomposed? If no other happiness is to be had, the mere war with decomposition is a kind of happiness. But the war with the Lord of Decomposition, the old Dragon himself,—St. George's war, with a princess to save, and win—are none of you, my poor friends, proud enough to hope for any part in that battle? Do you conceive no figure of any princess for May Queen; or is the definite dragon turned into indefinite cuttlefish, vomiting black venom into the waters of your life; or has he multiplied himself into an host of pulcarious dragons—bug-dragons, insatiable as unclean,—whose food you are, daily?

St. George's war! Here, since last May, when I engraved Giotto's Hope for you, have I been asking whether any one would volunteer for such battle? Not one human creature, except a personal friend or two, for mere love of me, has answered.

Now, it is true, that my writing may be obscure, or seem only half in earnest. But it is the best I can do: it expresses the thoughts that come to me as they come; and I have no time just now to put them into more intelligible words. And, whether you believe them or not, they are entirely faithful words; I have no interest at all to serve by writing, but your's.

And, literally, no one answers. Nay, even those who read, read so carelessly that they don't notice whether the book is to go on or not.

Heaven knows; but it shall, if I am able, and what I undertook last May, be fulfilled, so far as the poor faculty or time left me may serve.

Read over, now, the end of that letter for May last, from "To talk at a distance," in page 12.

I have given you the tenth of all I have, as I promised. I cannot, because of those lawyers I was talking of last month, get it given you in a permanent and accumulative form; besides that, among the various blockheadisms and rascalities of the day, the perversion of old endowments from their appointed purposes being now practised with applause, gives one little encouragement to think of the future. However, the seven thousand pounds are given, and wholly now out of my own power; and, as I said, only two or three friends, for love of me, and one for true love of justice also, have, in the course of the year, joined with me.

However, this is partly my own fault, for not saying more clearly what I want; and for expecting people to be moved by writing, instead of by personal effort. The more I see of writing the less I care for it: one may do more with a man by getting ten words spoken with him face to face, than by the black lettering of a whole life's thought.

In parenthesis, just read this little bit of Plato; and take it to heart. If the last sentence of it does not fit some people I know of, there is no prophecy on lip of man.

Socrates is speaking. "I have heard indeed—but no one can say now if it is true or not—that near Nancratis, in Egypt, there was born one of the old gods, the one to whom the bird is sacred which they call the ibis; and this god or demigod's name was Theuth." Second parenthesis—(Theuth, or Thoth: he always has the head of an ibis with a beautiful long bill, in Egyptian sculpture; and you may see him at the British Museum on stone and papyrus infinite,—especially attending at judgments after death, when people's sins are to be weighed in scales; for he is the Egyptian account-keeper, and adds up, and takes note of, things, as you will hear presently from Plato. He became the god of merchants, and a rogue, among the Romans, and is one now among us). "And this demigod found out first, they say, arithmetic, and logic, and geometry, and astronomy, and gambling, and the art of writing.

"And there was then a king over all Egypt, in the great city which the Greeks called Thebes. And Theuth, going to Thebes, showed the king all the arts he had invented, and said they should be taught to the Egyptians. But the king said:—'What was the good of them?' And Theuth telling him, at length, of each, the king blamed some things, and praised others. But when they came to writing: 'Now, *this* piece of learning, O king, says Theuth, 'will make the Egyptians more wise and more remembering; for this is physic for the memory, and for wisdom.' But the king answered:—'O most
9*

artful Theuth, it is one sort of person's business to invent arts, and quite another sort of person's business to know what mischief or good is in them. And you, the father of letters, are yet so simple-minded that you fancy their power just the contrary of what it really is; for this art of writing will bring forgetfulness into the souls of those who learn it, because, trusting to the external power of the scripture, and stamp* of other men's minds, and not themselves putting themselves in mind, within themselves, it is not medicine of divine memory, but a drug of memorandum, that you have discovered, and you will only give the reputation and semblance of wisdom, not the truth of wisdom, to the learners: for," (now *do* listen to this, you cheap education-mongers), "'for becoming hearers of many things, yet without instruction, they will seem to have manifold opinions, but be in truth without any opinions; and the most of them incapable of living together in any good understanding; having become seeming-wise, instead of wise.'"

So much for cheap literature; not that I like cheap talk better, mind you; but I wish I could get a word or two with a few honest people, now, face to face. For I have called the fund I have established The St. George's Fund, because I hope to find, here and there, some one who will join in a White Company, like Sir John Hawkwood's, to be called the Company of St. George;

* "Type," the actual word in the Greek.

which shall have for its end the wise creating and bestowing, instead of the wise stealing, of money. Now it literally happened that before the White Company went into Italy, there was an Italian Company called 'of St. George,' which was afterwards incorporated with Sir John's of the burnished armour; and another company, called 'of the Rose,' which was a very wicked and destructive one. And within my St. George's Company,—which shall be of persons still following their own business, wherever they are, but who will give the tenth of what they have, or make, for the purchase of land in England, to be cultivated by hand, as aforesaid in my last May number,—shall be another company, not destructive, called of "Monte Rosa," or "Mont Rose," because Monte Rosa is the central mountain of the range between north and south Europe, which keeps the gift of the rain of heaven. And the motto, or watchword of this company is to be the old French "Mont-joie." And they are to be entirely devoted, according to their power, first to the manual labour of cultivating pure land, and guiding of pure streams and rain to the places where they are needed: and secondly, together with this manual labour, and much by its means, they are to carry on the thoughtful labour of true education, in themselves, and of others. And they are not to be monks nor nuns; but are to learn, and teach all fair arts, and sweet order and obedience of life; and to educate the children entrusted to their schools in such practical arts and patient obedience; but not

at all, necessarily, in either arithmetic, writing, or reading.

That is my design, romantic enough, and at this day difficult enough: yet not so romantic, nor so difficult as your now widely and openly proclaimed design, of making the words "obedience" and "loyalty" to cease from the English tongue.

That same number of the *Republican* which announced that all property must be taken under control, was graced by a frontispiece, representing, figuratively, "Royalty in extremis;" the joyful end of Rule, and of every strength of Kingship; Britannia, having, perhaps, found her waves of late unruly, declaring there shall be no rule over the land neither. Some day I may let you compare this piece of figurative English art with Giotto's; but, meantime, since, before you look so fondly for the end of Royalty, it is well that you should know somewhat of its beginnings, I have given you a picture of one of the companions in the St. George's company of all time, out of a pretty book, published at Antwerp, by John Baptist Vrints, cutter of figures in copper, on the 16th April, 1598; and giving briefly the stories, and, in no unworthy imagination, the pictures also, of the first 'foresters' (rulers of woods and waves*) in Flanders, where the

* "Davantage, ilz se nommoient Forestiers, non que leur charge et gouvernement fust seulement sur la terre, qui estoit lors occupee et empeschee de la forest Charbonniere, mais la garde de la mer leur estoit aussi commise. Convient ici entendre, que ce terme, forest, en vieil

waves once needed, and received, much ruling ; and of the Counts of Flanders who succeeded them, of whom this one, Robert, surnamed " of Jerusalem," was the eleventh, and began to reign in 1077, being " a virtuous, prudent, and brave prince," who, having first taken good order in his money affairs, and ended some unjust claims his predecessors had made on church property ; and established a perpetual chancellorship, and legal superintendence over his methods of revenue ; took the cross against the infidels, and got the name, in Syria, for his prowess, of the " Son of St. George."

So he stands, leaning on his long sword—a man desirous of setting the world to rights, if it might be ; but not knowing the way of it, nor recognizing that the steel with which it can be done, must take another shape than that double-edged one.

And from the eleventh century to this dull nineteenth, less and less the rulers of men have known their weapon. So far, yet, are we from beating sword into ploughshare, that now the sword is set to undo the plough's work when it has been done ; and at this hour the ghastliest ruin of all that moulder from the fire, pierced through black rents by the unnatural sunlight above the ashamed streets of Paris, is the long, skeleton, and roofless hollow of the " Grenier d'Abondance."

bas Aleman, convenoit aussi bien aux eaux comme aux boys, ainsi qu'il est narré es memoires de Jean du Tillet."—*Les Genealogies des Forestiers et Comtes de Flandres*. Antp. 1598.

Such Agriculture have we contrived here, in Europe, and ploughing of new furrows for graves. Will you hear how Agriculture is now contrived in America, where, since you spend your time here in burning corn, you must send to buy it; trusting, however, still to your serviceable friend the Fire, as here to consume, so there, to sow and reap, for repairing of consumption. I have just received a letter from California, which I trust the writer will not blame me for printing:—

“SIR,

“*March 1st, 1872.*

“You have so strongly urged ‘agriculture by the hand,’ that it may be of some interest to you to know the result thus far of agriculture by machinery, in California. I am the more willing to address you on this subject from the fact that I may have to do with a new Colony in this State, which will, I trust, adopt as far as practicable, your ideas as to agriculture by the hand. Such thoughts as you might choose to give regarding the conduct of such a Colony here would be particularly acceptable; and should you deem it expedient to comply with this earnest and sincere request, the following facts may be of service to you in forming just conclusions.

“We have a genial climate, and a productive soil. Our farms (‘ranches’) frequently embrace many thousands of acres, while the rule is, scarcely ever less than hundreds of acres. Wheat-fields of 5,000 acres are by no

means uncommon, and not a few of above 40,000 acres are known. To cultivate these extensive tracts much machinery is used, such as steam-ploughs, gang-ploughs, reaping, mowing, sowing, and thrashing machines; and seemingly to the utter extermination of the spirit of home, and rural life. Gangs of labourers are hired during the emergency of harvesting; and they are left for the most part unhoused, and are also fed more like animals than men. Harvesting over, they are discharged, and thus are left near the beginning of our long and rainy winters to shift for themselves. Consequently the larger towns and cities are infested for months with idle men and boys. Housebreaking and highway robbery are of almost daily occurrence. As to the farmers themselves, they live in a dreamy, comfortless way, and are mostly without education or refinement. To show them how to live better and cleaner; to give them nobler aims than merely to raise wheat for the English market; to teach them the history of those five cities, and 'their girls to cook exquisitely,' &c., is surely a mission for earnest men in this country, no less than in England, to say nothing of the various accomplishments to which you have alluded. I have caused to be published in some of our farming districts many of the more important of your thoughts bearing on these subjects, and I trust with beneficial results.

"I trust I shall not intrude on Mr. Ruskin's patience if I now say something by way of thankfulness for what

I have received from your works.* I know not certainly if this will ever reach you. If it does, it may in some small way gladden you to know that I owe to your teaching almost all the good I have thus far attained. A large portion of my life has been spent at sea, and in roaming in Mexico, Central and South America, and in the Malaysian and Polynesian Islands. I have been a sailor before and abaft the mast. Years ago I found on a remote Island of the Pacific the *Modern Painters*; after them the *Seven Lamps of Architecture*; and finally your complete works. Ignorant and uncultivated, I began earnestly to follow certain of your teachings. I read most of the books you recommended, simply because you seemed to be my teacher; and so in the course of these years I have come to believe in you about as faithfully as one man ever believes in another. From having no fixed object in life I have finally found that I have something to do, and will ultimately, I trust, have something to say about sea-life, something that has not, I think, hitherto been said—if God ever permits me the necessary leisure from hard railway work, the most hopeless and depressing of all work I have hitherto done.

“Your most thankful servant,

* I accept the blame of vanity in printing the end of this letter, for the sake of showing more perfectly the temper of its writer, whom I have answered privately; in case my letter may not reach him, I should be grateful if he would send me again his address.

With the account given in the first part of this letter of the results of mechanical agriculture in California, you shall now compare a little sketch by Marmontel of the peasant life, not mechanical, in his own province. It is given, altering only the name of the river, in the "Contes Moraux," in the story, professing to continue that of Molière's *Misanthrope* :

"Alceste, discontented as you know, both with his mistress and with his judges, decided upon flying from men, and retired very far from Paris to the banks of the Vologne; this river, in which the shells enclose pearl, is yet more precious by the fertility which it causes to spring on its borders; the valley that it waters is one beautiful meadow. On one side of it rise smiling hills, scattered all over with woods and villages, on the other extends a vast level of fields covered with corn. It was there that Alceste went to live, forgotten by all, free from cares, and from irksome duties; entirely his own, and finally delivered from the odious spectacle of the world, he breathed freely, and praised heaven for having broken all his chains. A little study, much exercise, pleasures not vivid, but untroubled; in a word, a life peacefully active, preserved him from the ennui of solitude: he desired nothing, and regretted nothing. One of the pleasures of his retreat was to see the cultivated and fertile ground all about him nourishing a peasantry, which appeared to him happy. For a misanthrope who

has become so by his virtue, only thinks that he hates men, because he loves them. Alceste felt a strange softening of the heart mingled with joy at the sight of his fellow-creatures rich by the labour of their hand. 'Those people,' said he, 'are very happy to be still half savage. They would soon be corrupted if they were more civilized.' As he was walking in the country, he chanced upon a labourer who was ploughing, and singing as he ploughed. 'God have a care of you, my good man!' said he; 'you are very gay?' 'I mostly am,' replied the peasant. 'I am happy to hear it: that proves that you are content with your condition.' 'Until now, I have good cause to be.' 'Are you married?' 'Yes, thank heaven.' 'Have you any children?' 'I *had* five. I have lost one, but that is a mischief that may be mended.' 'Is your wife young?' 'She is twenty-five years old.' 'Is she pretty?' 'She is, for me, but she is better than pretty, she is good.' 'And you love her?' '*If* I love her! Who would not love her! I wonder?' 'And she loves you also, without doubt.' 'Oh! for that matter, with all her heart—just the same as before marriage.' 'Then you loved each other before marriage?' 'Without that, should we have let ourselves be caught?' 'And your children—are they healthy?' 'Ah! it's a pleasure to see them! The eldest is only five years old, and he's already a great deal cleverer than his father, and for my two girls, never was anything so charming! It'll be ill-luck indeed if *they* don't get husbands. The

youngest is sucking yet, but the little fellow will be stout and strong. Would you believe it?—he beats his sisters when they want to kiss their mother!—he's always afraid of anybody's taking him from the breast.' 'All that is, then, very happy?' 'Happy! I should think so—you should see the joy there is when I come back from my work! You would say they hadn't seen me for a year. I don't know which to attend to first. My wife is round my neck—my girls in my arms—my boy gets hold of my legs—little Jeannot is like to roll himself off the bed to get to me—and I, I laugh, and cry, and kiss all at once—for all that makes me cry!' 'I believe it, indeed,' said Alceste. 'You *know* it, sir, I suppose, for you are doubtless a father?' 'I have not that happiness.' 'So much the worse for you! There's nothing in the world worth having, but that.' 'And how do you live?' 'Very well: we have excellent bread, good milk, and the fruit of our orchard. My wife, with a little bacon, makes a cabbage soup that the King would be glad to eat! Then we have eggs from the poultry-yard; and on Sunday we have a feast, and drink a little cup of wine.' 'Yes, but when the year is bad?' 'Well, one expects the year to be bad, sometimes, and one lives on what one has saved from the good years.' 'Then there's the rigour of the weather—the cold and the rain, and the heat—that you have to bear.' 'Well! one gets used to it; and if you only knew the pleasure that one has in the evening, in getting the cool breeze after a day of summer; or, in

winter, warming one's hands at the blaze of a good fag got, between one's wife and children; and then one sups with good appetite, and one goes to bed; and think you, that one remembers the bad weather? Sometimes my wife says to me,—“My good man, do you hear the wind and the storm? Ah, suppose you were in the fields?” “But I'm *not* in the fields, I'm here,” I say to her. Ah, sir! there are many people in the fine world, who don't live as content as we.’ ‘Well! but the taxes?’ ‘We pay them merrily—and well we should—all the country can't be noble, our squires and judges can't come to work in the fields with us—they do for us what we can't—we do for them what they can't—and every business, as one says, has its pains.’ ‘What equity!’ said the misanthrope; ‘there, in two words, is all the economy of primitive society. Ah, Nature! there is nothing just but thee! and the healthiest reason is in thy untaught simplicity. But, in paying the taxes so willingly, don't you run some risk of getting more put on you?’ ‘We used to be afraid of that; but, thank God, the lord of the place has relieved us from this anxiety. He plays the part of our good king to us. He imposes and receives himself, and, in case of need, makes advances for us. He is as careful of us as if we were his own children.’ ‘And who is this gallant man?’ ‘The Viscount Laval—he is known enough, all the country respects him.’ ‘Does he live in his château?’ ‘He passes eight months of the year there.’ ‘And the rest?’ ‘At

Paris, I believe. ‘Does he see any company?’ ‘The townspeople of Bruyeres, and now and then, some of our old men go to taste his soup and chat with him.’ ‘And from Paris does he bring nobody?’ ‘Nobody but his daughter.’ ‘He is much in the right. And how does he employ himself?’ ‘In judging between us—in making up our quarrels—in marrying our children—in maintaining peace in our families—in helping them when the times are bad.’ ‘You must take me to see his village,’ said Alceste, ‘that must be interesting.’

“He was surprised to find the roads, even the cross-roads, bordered with hedges, and kept with care; but, coming on a party of men occupied in mending them, ‘Ah!’ he said, ‘so you’ve got forced labour here?’ ‘Forced,’ answered an old man who presided over the work. ‘We know nothing of that here, sir; all these men are paid, we constrain nobody; only, if there comes to the village a vagrant, or a do-nothing, they send him to me, and if he wants bread he can gain it; or, he must go to seek it elsewhere.’ ‘And who has established this happy police?’ ‘Our good lord—our father—the father to all of us.’ ‘And where do the funds come from?’ ‘From the commonalty; and, as it imposes the tax on itself, it does not happen here, as too often elsewhere, that the rich are exempted at the expense of the poor.’

“The esteem of Alceste increased every moment for the wise and benevolent master who governed all this little country. ‘How powerful would a king be?’ he

said to himself— ‘and how happy a state ! if all the great proprietors followed the example of this one ; but Paris absorbs both property and men, it robs all, and swallows up everything.’

“ The first glance at the village showed him the image of confidence and comfort. He entered a building which had the appearance of a public edifice, and found there a crowd of children, women, and old men occupied in useful labour ;—idleness was only permitted to the extremely feeble. Childhood, almost at its first steps out of the cradle, caught the habit and the taste for work ; and old age, at the borders of the tomb, still exercised its trembling hands : the season in which the earth rests brought every vigorous arm to the workshops—and then the lathe, the saw, and the hatchet gave new value to products of nature.

“ ‘ I am not surprised,’ said Alceste, ‘ that this people is pure from vice, and relieved from discontent. It is laborious, and occupied without ceasing.’ He asked how the workshop had been established. ‘ Our good lord,’ was the reply, ‘ advanced the first funds for it. It was a very little place at first, and all that was done was at his expense, at his risk, and to his profit ; but, once convinced that there was solid advantage to be gained, he yielded the enterprise to us, and now interferes only to protect ; and every year he gives to the village the instruments of some one of our arts. It is the present that he makes at the first wedding which is celebrated in the year.’ ”

Thus wrote, and taught, a Frenchman of the old school, before the Revolution. But worldly-wise Paris went on her own way absorbing property and men; and has attained, this first of May, what means and manner of festival you see in her Grenier d'Abondance.

Glance back now to my proposal for the keeping of the first of May, in the letter on "Rose Gardens" in *Time and Tide*, and discern which state is best for you—modern "civilization," or Marmontel's rusticity, and mine.

Every faithfully yours,

JOHN RUSKIN.

LETTER XVIII.

MY FRIENDS,

PISA, 29th April, 1872.

You would pity me, if you knew how seldom I see a newspaper, just now; but I chanced on one yesterday, and found that all the world was astir about the marriage of the Marquis of B., and that the Pope had sent him, on that occasion, a telegraphic blessing of superfine quality.

I wonder what the Marquis of B. has done to deserve to be blessed to that special extent, and whether a little mild beatitude, sent here to Pisa, might not have been better spent? For, indeed, before getting hold of the papers, I had been greatly troubled, while drawing the east end of the Duomo, by three fellows who were leaning against the Leaning Tower, and expectorating loudly and copiously, at intervals of half a minute each, over the white marble base of it, which they evidently conceived to have been constructed only to be spit upon. They were all in rags, and obviously proposed to remain in rags all their days, and pass what leisure of life they could obtain, in spitting. There was a boy with them, in rags also, and not less expectorant; but having some remains of human activity in him still, being not more than twelve years old; and he was even a little interested in my brushes and colours, but rewarded himself, after the effort of some attention to these, by revolving slowly round the iron railing

in front of me like a pensive squirrel. This operation at last disturbed me so much, that I asked him if there were no other railings in Pisa he could turn upside down over, but these? "Sono cascato, Signor—" "I tumbled over them, please, Sir," said he, apologetically, with infinite satisfaction in his black eyes.

Now it seemed to me that these three moist-throated men and the squirrelline boy stood much more in need of a paternal blessing than the Marquis of B.—a blessing, of course, with as much of the bloom off it as would make it consistent with the position in which Providence had placed them; but enough, in its moderate way, to bring the good out of them instead of the evil. For there was all manner of good in them, deep and pure—yet for ever to be dormant; and all manner of evil, shallow and superficial, yet for ever to be active and practical, as matters stood that day, under the Leaning Tower.

Lucca, 7th May.—Eight days gone, and I've been working hard, and looking my carefulest; and seem to have done nothing, nor begun to see these places, though I've known them thirty years, and though Mr. Murray's Guide says one may see Lucca, and its Ducal Palace and Piazza, the Cathedral, the Baptistery, nine churches, and the Roman amphitheatre, and take a drive round the ramparts, in the time between the stopping of one train and the starting of the next.

I wonder how much time Mr. Murray would allow for

the view I had to-day, from the tower of the Cathedral, up the valley called of "Niévole,"—now one tufted softness of fresh springing leaves, far as the eye can reach. You know something of the produce of the hills that bound it, and perhaps of its own: at least, one used to see "Fine Lucca Oil" often enough in the grocers' windows (petroleum has, I suppose, now taken its place), and the staple of Spitalfields was, I believe, first woven with Lucca thread.

The actual manner of production of these good things is thus:—The Val di Niévole is some five miles wide by thirty long, and is simply one field of corn or rich grass land, undivided by hedges; the corn two feet high, and more, to-day. Quite Lord Derby's style of agriculture, you think? No; not quite. Undivided by hedges, the fields are yet meshed across and across by an intricate network of posts and chains. The posts are maple-trees, and the chains, garlands of vine. The meshes of this net each enclose two or three acres of the corn-land, with a row of mulberry-trees up the middle of it, for silk. There are poppies, and bright ones too, about the banks and roadsides; but the corn of Val di Niévole is too proud to grow with poppies, and is set with wild gladiolus instead, deep violet. Here and there a mound of crag rises out of the fields, crested with stone-pine, and studded all over with large stars of the white rock-cistus. Quiet streams, filled with the close crowds of the golden water-flag, wind beside meadows painted with purple orchis. On each side of the great plain is a wilderness of hills,

veiled at their feet with a grey cloud of olive woods; above, sweet with glades of chestnut; peaks of more distant blue, still, to-day, embroidered with snow, are rather to be thought of as vast precious stones than mountains, for all the state of the world's palaces has been hewn out of their marble.

I was looking over all this from under the rim of a large bell, beautifully embossed, with a St. Sebastian upon it, and some lovely thin-edged laurel leaves, and an inscription saying that the people should be filled with the fat of the land, if they listened to the voice of the Lord. The bell-founder of course meant, by the voice of the Lord, the sound of his own bell; and all over the plain, one could see towers rising above the vines, voiced in the same manner. Also much trumpeting and fiddling goes on below, to help the bells, on holy days; and, assuredly, here is fat enough of land to be filled with, if listening to these scrapings and tinklings were indeed the way to be filled.

The laurel leaves on the bell were so finely hammered that I felt bound to have a ladder set against the lip of it, that I might examine them more closely; and the sacristan and bell-ringer were so interested in this proceeding that they got up, themselves, on the cross-beams, and sat like two jackdaws, looking on, one on each side; for which expression of sympathy I was deeply grateful, and offered the bell-ringer, on the spot, two bank-notes for tenpence each. But they were so rotten with age, and so brittle and black with tobacco, that, having unad-

visedly folded them up small in my purse, the patches on their backs had run their corners through them, and they came out tattered like so much tinder. The bell-ringer looked at them hopelessly, and gave me them back. I promised him some better patched ones, and folded the remnants of tinder up carefully, to be kept at Coniston (where we have still a tenpence-worth or so of copper,—though no olive oil)—for specimens of the currency of the new Kingdom of Italy.

Such are the monuments of financial art, attained by a nation which has lived in the fattest of lands for at least three thousand years, and for the last twelve hundred of them has had at least some measure of Christian benediction, with help from bell, book, candle, and, recently, even from gas.

Yet you must not despise the benediction, though it has not provided them with clean bank-notes. The peasant race, at least, of the Val di Niévole are not unblest; if honesty, kindness, food sufficient for them, and peace of heart, can anywise make up for poverty in current coin. Only the evening before last, I was up among the hills to the south of Lucca, close to the remains of the country-house of Castruccio Castracani, who was Lord of the Val di Niévole, and much good land besides, in the year 1328; (and whose sword, you perhaps remember, was presented to the King of Sardinia, now King of Italy, when first he visited the Lucchese after driving out the old Duke of Tuscany; and Mrs. Browning wrote a poem

upon the presentation ;) a Neapolitan Duchess has got his country-house now, and has restored it to her taste. Well, I was up among the hills, that way, in places where no English, nor Neapolitans either, ever dream of going, being altogether lovely and at rest, and the country life in them unchanged ; and I had several friends with me, and among them one of the young girls who were at Furness Abbey last year ; and, scrambling about among the vines, she lost a pretty little cross of Florentine work. Luckily, she had made acquaintance, only the day before, with the peasant mistress of a cottage close by, and with her two youngest children, Adam and Eve. Eve was still tied up tight in swaddling clothes, down to the toes, and carried about as a bundle ; but Adam was old enough to run about ; and found the cross, and his mother gave it us back next day.

Not unblest, such a people, though with some common human care and kindness you might bless them a little more. If only you would not curse them ; but the curse of your modern life is fatally near, and only for a few years more, perhaps, they will be seen—driving their tawny kine, or with their sheep following them,—to pass, like pictures in enchanted motion, among their glades of vine.

•

Rome, 12th May.—I am writing at the window of a new inn, whence I have a view of a large green gas-lamp, and of a pond, in rustic rock-work, with four large black

ducks in it; also of the top of the Pantheon; sundry ruined walls; tiled roofs innumerable; and a palace about a quarter of a mile long, and the height, as near as I can guess, of Folkestone cliffs under the New Parade: all which I see to advantage over a balustrade veneered with an inch of marble over four inches of cheap stone, carried by balusters of cast iron, painted and sanded, but with the rust coming through,—this being the proper modern recipe in Italy for balustrades which may meet the increasing demand of travellers for splendour of abode. (By the way, I see I can get a pretty little long vignette view of the roof of the Pantheon, and some neighbouring churches, through a chink between the veneering and the freestone.)

Standing in this balcony, I am within three hundred yards of the greater Church of St. Mary, from which Castruccio Castracani walked to St. Peter's on 17th January, 1328, carrying the sword of the German Empire, with which he was appointed to gird its Emperor, on his taking possession of Rome, by Castruccio's help, in spite of the Pope. The Lord of the Val di Nievole wore a dress of superb damask silk, doubtless the best that the worms of Lucca mulberry-trees could spin; and across his breast an embroidered scroll, inscribed, "He is what God made him," and across his shoulders, behind, another scroll, inscribed, "And he shall be what God will make."

On the 3rd of August, that same year, he recovered Pistoja from the Florentines, and rode home to his own

Lucca in triumph, being then the greatest war-captain in Europe, and Lord of Pisa, Pistoja, Lucca, half the coast of Genoa, and three hundred fortified castles in the Apennines; on the third of September he lay dead in Lucca, of fever. "Crushed before the moth;" as the silkworm's also, who were boiled before even they became so much as moths, to make his embroidered coat for him. And, humanly speaking, because he had worked too hard in the trenches of Pistoja, in the dog-days, with his armour on, and with his own hands on the mattock, like the good knight he was.

Nevertheless, his sword was no gift for the King of Italy, if the Lucchese had thought better of it. For those three hundred castles of his were all Robber-castles, and he, in fact, only the chief captain of the three hundred thieves who lived in them. In the beginning of his career, these "towers of the Lunigiana belonged to gentlemen who had made brigandage in the mountains, or piracy on the sea, the sole occupation of their youth. Castruccia united them round him, and called to his little court all the exiles and adventurers who were wandering from town to town, in search of war or pleasures." *

And, indeed, to Professors of Art, the Apennine between Lucca and Pistoja is singularly delightful to this day, because of the ruins of these robber-castles on every mound, and of the pretty monasteries and arcades of

* SISMONDI : *History of Italian Republics*, Vol. III., Chap. ii.

cloister beside them. But how little we usually estimate the real relation of these picturesque objects ! The homes of Baron and Clerk, side by side, established on the hills. Underneath, in the plain, the peasant driving his oxen. The Baron lives by robbing the peasant, and the Clerk by blessing the Baron.

Blessing and absolving, though the Barons of grandest type could live, and resolutely die, without absolution. Old Straw-Mattress of Evilstone,* at ninety-six, sent his son from beside his death-mattress to attack the castle of the Bishop of Arezzo, thinking the Bishop would be off his guard, news having gone abroad that the grey-haired Knight of Evilstone could sit his horse no more. But, usually, the absolution was felt to be needful towards the end of life ; and if one thinks of it, the two kinds of edifices on the hill-tops may be shortly described as those of the Pillager and Pardoner, or Pardonere, Chaucer's word being classical in spelling, and the best general one for the clergy of the two great Evangelical and Papal sects. Only a year or two ago, close to the Crystal Palace, I heard the Rev. Mr. Tipple announce from his pulpit that there was no thief, nor devourer of widows' houses, nor any manner of sinner, in his congregation that day, who might not leave the church an entirely pardoned and entirely respectable person, if he would only believe what the Rev. Mr. Tipple was about to announce to him.

* " Saccone of Pietra-mala."

Strange, too, how these two great pardoning religions agree in the accompaniment of physical filth. I have never been hindered from drawing street subjects by pure human stench, but in two cities,—Edinburgh and Rome.

There are some things, however, which Edinburgh and London pardon, now-a-days, which Rome would not. Penitent thieves, by all means, but not impenitent; still less impenitent peculators.

Have patience a little, for I must tell you one or two things more about Lucca: they are all connected with the history of Florence, which is to be one of the five cities you are to be able to give account of; and, by the way, remember at once, that her florin in the 14th century was of such pure gold that when in “Chaucer’s Pardoner’s Tale” Death puts himself into the daintiest dress he can, it is into a heap of “floreines faire and bright.” He has chosen another form at Lucca; and when I had folded up my two bits of refuse tinder, I walked into the Cathedral to look at the golden lamp which hangs before the Sacred Face—twenty-four pounds of pure gold in the lamp: Face of wood: the oath of kings, since William Rufus’ days; carved eighteen hundred years ago, if one would believe, and very full of pardon to faithful Lucchese; yet, to some, helpless.

There are, I suppose, no educated persons in Italy, and few in England, who do not profess to admire Dante; and, perhaps, out of every hundred of these admirers, three or four may have read the bit about Francesca di Rimini, the

death of Ugolino, and the description of the Venetian Arsenal. But even of these honestly studious three or four, we should rarely find one, who knew why the Venetian Arsenal was described. You shall hear, if you will.

“As, in the Venetian Arsenal, the pitch boils in the winter time, wherewith to caulk their rotten ships . .

. so, not by fire, but divine art, a thick pitch boiled there, beneath, which had plastered itself all up over the banks on either side. But in it I could see nothing, except the bubbles that its boiling raised, which from time to time made it all swell up over its whole surface, and presently fall back again depressed. And as I looked at it fixedly, and wondered, my guide drew me back hastily, saying, ‘Look, look!’ And when I turned, I saw behind us, a black devil come running along the rocks. Ah, how wild his face! ah, how bitter his action as he came with his wings wide, light upon his feet! On his shoulder he bore a sinner, grasped by both haunches; and when he came to the bridge foot, he cried down into the pit: ‘Here’s an ancient from Lucca; put him under, that I may fetch more, for the land is full of such; there, for money, they make “No” into “Yes” quickly.’ And he cast him in and turned back,—never mastiff fiercer after his prey. The thrown sinner plunged in the pitch, and curled himself up; but the devils from under the bridge cried out, ‘There’s no holy face here; here one swims otherwise than in the Serchio.’ And they caught him with their hooks and pulled him under, as cooks do the meat in broth; cry-

ing, 'People play here hidden; so that they may filch in secret, if they can.' "

Doubtless, you consider all this extremely absurd, and are of opinion that such things are not likely to happen in the next world. Perhaps not; nor is it clear that Dante believed they would; but I should be glad if you would tell me what you think *is* likely to happen there. In the meantime, please to observe Dante's figurative meaning, which is by no means absurd. Every one of his scenes has symbolic purpose, down to the least detail. This lake of pitch is money, which, in our own vulgar English phrase, "sticks to people's fingers;" it clogs and plasters its margin all over, because the mind of a man bent on dishonest gain makes everything within its reach dirty; it bubbles up and down, because underhand gains nearly always involve alternate excitement and depression; and it is haunted by the most cruel and indecent of all the devils, because there is nothing so mean, and nothing so cruel, but a peculator will do it. So you may read every line figuratively, if you choose: all that I want is, that you should be acquainted with the opinions of Dante concerning speculation. For with the history of the five cities, I wish you to know also the opinions, on all subjects personally interesting to you, of five people who lived in them; namely, of Plato, Virgil, Dante, Victor Carpaccio (whose opinions I must gather for you from his paintings, for painting is the way Venetians write), and Shakspeare.

If, after knowing these five men's opinions on practical

matters (these five, as you will find, being all of the same mind), you prefer to hold Mr. J. S. Mill's and Mr. Fawcett's opinions, you are welcome. And indeed I may as well end this by at once examining some of Mr. Fawcett's statements on the subject of Interest, that being one of our chief modern modes of speculation; but, before we put aside Dante for to-day, just note farther this, that while he has sharp punishment for thieves, forgers, and speculators,—the thieves being changed into serpents, the forgers covered with leprosy, and the speculators boiled in pitch,—he has no punishment for bad workmen; no Tuscan mind at that day being able to conceive such a ghastly sin as a man's doing bad work wilfully; and, indeed, I think the Tuscan mind, and in some degree the Piedmontese, retain some vestige of this old temper; for though, not a fortnight since (on 3rd May), the cross of marble in the arch-spandril next the east end of the Chapel of the Thorn at Pisa was dashed to pieces before my eyes, as I was drawing it for my class in heraldry at Oxford, by a stone-mason, that his master might be paid for making a new one, I have no doubt the new one will be as honestly like the old as master and man can make it; and Mr. Murray's Guide will call it a judicious restoration. So also, though here, the new Government is digging through the earliest rampart of Rome (*agger* of Servius Tullius), to build a new Finance Office, which will doubtless issue tenpenny notes in Latin, with the dignity of *denarii* (the “pence” of your New Testament),

I have every reason to suppose the new Finance Office will be substantially built, and creditable to its masons; (the veneering and cast-iron work being, I believe, done mostly at the instigation of British building companies.) But it seems strange to me that, coming to Rome for quite other reasons, I should be permitted by the Third Fors to see the *agger* of Tullius cut through, for the site of a Finance Office, and his Mons Justitiæ (Mount of Justice), presumably the most venerable piece of earth in Italy, carted away, to make room for a railroad station of Piccola Velocità. For Servius Tullius was the first king who stamped money with the figures of animals, and introduced a word among the Romans with the sound of which Englishmen are also now acquainted, "pecunia." Moreover, it is in speaking of this very *agger* of Tullius that Livy explains in what reverence the Romans held the space between the outer and inner walls of their cities, which modern Italy delights to turn into a Boulevard.

Now then, for Mr. Fawcett:—

At the 146th page of the edition of his *Manual* previously quoted, you will find it stated that the interest of money consists of three distinct parts:

1. Reward for abstinence.
2. Compensation for the risk of loss.
3. Wages for the labour of superintendence.

I will reverse this order in examining the statements; for the only real question is as to the first, and we had better at once clear the other two away from it.

3. Wages for the labour of superintendence.

By giving the capitalist wages at all, we put him at once into the class of labourers, which in my November letter I showed you is partly right ; but, by Mr. Fawcett's definition, and in the broad results of business, he is not a labourer. So far as he is one, of course, like any other, he is to be paid for his work. There is no question but that the partner who superintends any business should be paid for superintendence ; but the question before us is only respecting payment for doing nothing. I have, for instance, at this moment 15,000*l.* of bank stock, and receive 1,200*l.* odd, a year, from the Bank, but I have never received the slightest intimation from the directors that they wished for my assistance in the superintendence of that establishment ;—(more shame for them.) But even in cases where the partners are active, it does not follow that the one who has most money in the business is either fittest to superintend it, or likely to do so ; it is indeed probable that a man who has made money already will know how to make more ; and it is necessary to attach some importance to property as the sign of sense : but your business is to choose and pay your superintendent for his sense, and not for his money. Which is exactly what Mr. Carlyle has been telling you for some time ; and both he and all his disciples entirely approve of interest, if you are indeed prepared to define that term as payment for the exercise of common sense spent in the service of the person who pays for it. I reserve yet

awhile, however, what is to be said, as hinted in my first letter, about the sale of ideas.

2. Compensation for risk.

Does Mr. Fawcett mean by compensation for risk, protection from it, or reward for running it? Every business involves a certain quantity of risk, which is properly covered by every prudent merchant, but he does not expect to make a profit out of his risks, nor calculate on a percentage on his insurance. If he prefer not to insure, does Professor Fawcett mean that his customers ought to compensate him for his anxiety; and that while the definition of the first part of interest is extra payment for prudence, the definition of the second part of interest is extra payment for *imprudence*? Or, does Professor Fawcett mean, what is indeed often the fact, that interest for money represents such reward for risk as people may get across the green cloth at Homburg or Monaco? Because so far as what used to be business is, in modern political economy, gambling, Professor Fawcett will please to observe that what one gamester gains another loses. You cannot get anything out of Nature, or from God, by gambling;—only out of your neighbour: and to the quantity of interest of money thus gained, you are mathematically to oppose a precisely equal *disinterest* of somebody else's money.

These second and third reasons for interest then, assigned by Professor Fawcett, have evidently nothing whatever to do with the question. What I want to know

is, why the Bank of England is paying me 1,200% a year. It certainly does not pay me for superintendence. And so far from receiving my dividend as compensation for risk, I put my money into the bank because I thought it exactly the safest place to put it in. But nobody can be be more anxious than I to find it proper that I should have 1,200% a year. Finding two of Mr. Fawcett's reasons fail me utterly, I cling with tenacity to the third, and hope the best from it.

The third, or first,—and now too sorrowfully the last—of the Professor's reasons, is this, that my 1,200% are given me as "the reward of abstinence." It strikes me, upon this, that if I had not my 15,000% of Bank Stock I should be a good deal more abstinent than I am, and that nobody would then talk of rewarding me for it. It might be possible to find even cases of very prolonged and painful abstinence, for which no reward has yet been adjudged by less abstinent England. Abstinence may, indeed, have its reward, nevertheless; but not by increase of what we abstain from, unless there be a law of growth for it, unconnected with our abstinence. "You cannot have your cake and eat it." Of course not; and if you don't eat it, you have your cake; but not a cake and a half! Imagine the complex trial of schoolboy minds, if the law of nature about cakes were, that if you ate none of your cake to-day, you would have ever so much bigger a cake to-morrow!—which is Mr. Fawcett's notion of the law of nature about money; and, alas, many a man's

beside,—it being no law of nature whatever, but absolutely contrary to all her laws, and not to be enacted by the whole force of united mankind.

Not a cake and a quarter to-morrow, dunce, however abstinent you are—only the cake you have,—if the mice don't get at it in the night.

Interest, then, is not, it appears, payment for labour ; it is not reward for risk ; it is not reward for abstinence.

What is it ?

One of two things it is ;—taxation, or usury. Of which in my next letter. Meantime believe me

Faithfully yours,

J. RUSKIN.

LETTER XIX.

MY FRIENDS,

VERONA, 18th June, 1872.

WHAT an age of progress it is, by help of advertisements! No wonder you put some faith in them, friends. In summer one's work is necessarily much before breakfast; so, coming home tired to-day, I order a steak, with which is served to me a bottle of "Montarde Diaphane," from Bordeaux.

What a beautiful arrangement have we here! Fancy the appropriate mixture of manufactures of cold and hot at Bordeaux—claret and diaphanous mustard! Then the quantity of printing and proclamation necessary to make people in Verona understand that diaphanous mustard is desirable, and may be had at Bordeaux. Fancy, then, the packing, and peeping into the packages, and porterages, and percentages on porterages; and the engineering, and the tunnelling, and the bridge-building, and the steam whistling, and the grinding of iron, and raising of dust in the Limousin (Marmontel's country), and in Burgundy, and in Savoy, and under the Mont Cenis, and in Piedmont, and in Lombardy, and at last over the field of Solferino, to fetch me my bottle of diaphanous mustard!

And to think that, besides paying the railway officers all along the line, and the custom-house officers at the

frontier, and the original expenses of advertisement, and the profits of its proprietors, my diaphanous mustard paid a dividend to somebody or other, all the way here! I wonder it is not more diaphanous by this time!

An age of progress, indeed, in which the founding of my poor St. George's company, growing its own mustard, and desiring no dividends, may well seem difficult. I have scarcely had courage yet to insist on that second particular, but will try to find it, on this Waterloo day.

Observe, then, once for all, it is to be a company for Alms-giving, not for dividend-getting. For I still believe in Alms-giving, though most people now-a-days do not, but think the only hopeful way of serving their neighbour is to make a profit out of him. I am of opinion, on the contrary, that the hopefullest way of serving him is to let him make a profit out of *me*, and I only ask the help of people who are at one with me in that mind.

Alms-giving, therefore, is to be our function; yet alms only of a certain sort. For there are bedesmen and bedesmen, and our charities must be as discriminate as possible.

For instance, those two steely and stalwart horsemen, who sit, by the hour, under the two arches opposite Whitehall, from ten to four per diem, to receive the public alms. It is their singular and well-bred manner of begging, indeed, to keep their helmets on their heads, and sit erect on horseback; but one may, with slight effort of imagination, conceive the two hemlets held in a reversed

manner, each in the mouth of a well-bred and politely-behaving dog, Irish greyhound, or the like ; sitting erect, it also, paws in air, with the brass instead of copper pan in its mouth, plume downwards, for reception of pence.

“Ready to fight for us, they are, on occasional 18ths of June.”

Doubtless, and able-bodied ;—barons of truest make : but I thought your idea of discriminate charity was to give rather to the sick than the able-bodied ? and that you have no hope of interfering henceforward, except by money payments, in any foreign affairs ?

“But the Guards are necessary to keep order in the Park.”

Yes, certainly, and farther than the Park. The two breastplated figures, glittering in transfixed attitudes on each side of the authoritative clock, are, indeed, very precious time-piece ornamentation. No watchmaker’s window in Paris or Geneva can show the like. Finished little figures, perfect down to the toes of their boots,—the enamelled clasp on the girdle of the British Constitution ! You think the security of that depends on the freedom of your press, and the purity of your elections ?

Do but unclasp this piece of dainty jewellery ; send the metal of it to the melting-pot, and see where your British Constitution will be, in a few turns of the hands of the faultless clock. They are precious statues, these, good friends ; set there to keep you and me from having too

much of our own way; and I joyfully and gratefully drop my penny into each helmet as I pass by, though I expect no other dividend from that investment than good order, picturesque effect, and an occasional flourish on the kettle-drum.

Likewise, from their contributed pence, the St. George's Company must be good enough to expect dividend only in good order and picturesque effect of another sort. For my notion of discriminate charity is by no means, like most other people's, the giving to unable-bodied paupers. My alms-people are to be the ablest bodied I can find; the ablest minded I can make; and from ten to four every day will be on duty. Ten to four, nine to three, or perhaps six to twelve;—just the time those two gilded figures sit with their tools idle on their shoulders, (being fortunately without employment,) my ungilded, but not unstateily, alms-men shall stand with tools at work, mattock or flail, axe or hammer. And I do not doubt but in little time, they will be able to thresh or hew rations for their day out of the ground, and that our help to them need only be in giving them that to hew them out of. Which, you observe, is just what I ask may be bought for them.

“‘May be bought,’ but by whom? and for whom, how distributed, in whom vested?” and much more you have to ask.

As soon as I am sure you understand what needs to be done, I will satisfy you as to the way of doing it.

But I will not let you know my plans, till you acknowledge my principles, which I have no expectation of your doing yet awhile.

June 22nd.

“Bought for *them*”—for whom? How should I know? The best people I can find, or make, as chance may send them: the Third Fors must look to it. Surely it cannot matter much, to you, whom the thing helps, so long as you are quite sure, and quite content, that it won’t help you?

That last sentence is wonderfully awkward English, not to say ungrammatical; but I must write such English as may come to-day, for there’s something wrong with the Post, or the railroads, and I have no revise of what I wrote for you at Florence, a fortnight since; so that must be left for the August Letter, and meanwhile I must write something quickly in its place, or be too late for the first of July. Of the many things I have to say to you, it matters little which comes first; indeed, I rather like the Third Fors to take the order of them into her hands, out of mine.

I repeat my question. It surely cannot matter to you whom the thing helps, so long as you are content that it won’t, or can’t, help you? But are you content so? For that is the essential condition of the whole business—I will not speak of it in terms of money—are you content to give work? Will you build a bit of wall, suppose—to

serve your neighbour, expecting no good of the wall yourself? If so, you must be satisfied to build the wall for the man who wants it built; you must not be resolved first to be sure that he is the best man in the village. Help any one, anyhow you can: so, in order, the greatest possible number will be helped; nay, in the end, perhaps, you may get some shelter from the wind under your charitable wall yourself; but do not expect it, nor lean on any promise that you shall find your bread again, once cast away; I can only say that of what I have chosen to cast fairly on the waters myself, I have never yet, after any number of days, found a crumb. Keep what you want; cast what you can, and expect nothing back, once lost, or once given.

But for the actual detail of the way in which benefit might thus begin, and diffuse itself, here is an instance close at hand. Yesterday a thunder-shower broke over Verona in the early afternoon; and in a quarter of an hour the streets were an inch deep in water over large spaces, and had little rivers at each side of them. All these little rivers ran away into the large river—the Adige, which plunges down under the bridges of Verona, writhing itself in strong rage; for Verona, with its said bridges, is a kind of lock-gate upon the Adige, half open—lock-gate on the ebbing rain of all the South Tyrolean Alps. The little rivers ran into it, not out of the streets only, but from all the hillsides; millions of sudden streams; if you look at Charles Dickens's letter about the

rain in Glencoe, in Mr. Forster's Life of him, it will give you a better idea of the kind of thing than I can, for my forte is really not description, but political economy. Two hours afterwards the sky was clear, the streets dry, the whole thunder-shower was in the Adige, ten miles below Verona, making the best of its way to the sea, after swelling the Po a little (which is inconveniently high already), and I went out with my friends to see the sun set clear, as it was likely to do, and did, over the Tyrolese mountains.

The place fittest for such purpose is a limestone crag about five miles nearer the hills, rising out of the bed of a torrent, which, as usual, I found a bed only; a little washing of the sand into moist masses here and there being the only evidence of the past rain.

Above it, where the rocks were dry, we sat down, to draw, or to look; but I was too tired to draw, and cannot any more look at a sunset with comfort, because, now that I am fifty-three, the sun seems to me to set so horribly fast; when one was young, it took its time; but now it always drops like a shell, and before I can get any image of it, is gone, and another day with it.

So, instead of looking at the sun, I got thinking about the dry bed of the stream, just beneath. Ugly enough it was; cut by occasional inundation irregularly out of the thick masses of old Alpine shingle, nearly every stone of it the size of an ostrich-egg. And, by the way, the average size of shingle in given localities is worth your

thinking about, geologically. All through this Veronese plain the stones are mostly of ostrich-egg size in shape; some forty times as big as the pebbles of English shingle (say of the Addington Hills), and not flat nor round; but resolvedly oval. Now there is no reason, that I know of, why large mountains should break into large pebbles, and small ones into small; and indeed the consistent reduction of our own masses of flint, as big as a cauliflower, leaves and all, into the flattish rounded pebble, seldom wider across than half a crown, of the banks of Addington, is just as strange a piece of systematic reduction as the grinding of Monte Baldo into sculpture of ostrich-eggs:—neither of the processes, observe, depending upon questions of time, but of method of fracture.

The evening drew on, and two peasants who had been cutting hay on a terrace of meadow among the rocks, left their work, and came to look at the sketchers, and make out, if they could, what we wanted on their ground. They did not speak to us, but bright light came into the face of one, evidently the master, on being spoken to, and excuse asked of him for our presence among his rocks, by which he courteously expressed himself as pleased, no less than (though this he did not say) puzzled.

Some talk followed, of cold and heat, and anything else one knew the Italian for, or could understand the Veronese for (Veronese being more like Spanish than Italian); and I praised the country, as was just, or at

least as I could, and said I should like to live there. Whereupon he commended it also, in measured terms; and said the wine was good. "But the water?" I asked, pointing to the dry river-bed. The water was bitter, he said, and little wholesome. "Why, then, have you let all that thunder-shower go down the Adige, three hours ago?" "That was the way the showers came." "Yes, but not the way they ought to go." (We were standing by the side of a cleft in the limestone which ran down through ledge after ledge, from the top of the cliff, mostly barren; but my farmer's man had led two of his grey oxen to make what they could of supper from the tufts of grass on the sides of it, half an hour before). "If you had ever been at the little pains of throwing half-a-dozen yards of wall here, from rock to rock, you would have had, at this moment, a pool of standing water as big as a mill-pond, kept out of that thunder-shower, which very water, to-morrow morning, will probably be washing away somebody's hay-stack into the Po."

The above was what I wanted to say; but didn't know the Italian for hay-stack. I got enough out to make the farmer understand what I meant.

Yes, he said, that would be very good, but "*la spesa?*"

"The expense!" "What would be the expense to you of gathering a few stones from this hillside? And the idle minutes, gathered out of a week, if a neighbour or two joined in the work, could do all the building." He paused at this—the idea of neighbours joining in

work appearing to him entirely abortive, and untenable by a rational being. Which indeed, throughout Christendom, it at present is,—thanks to the beautiful instructions and orthodox catechisms impressed by the two great sects of Evangelical and Papal pardoners on the minds of their respective flocks—(and on their lips also, early enough in the lives of the little bleating things. “Che cosa è la fede?” I heard impetuously interrogated of a seven years’ old one, by a conscientious lady in a black gown and white cap, in St. Michael’s, at Lucca, and answered in a glib speech a quarter of a minute long). Neither have I ever thought of, far less seriously proposed, such a monstrous thing as that neighbours should help one another; but I have proposed, and do solemnly still propose, that people who have got no neighbours, but are outcasts and Samaritans, as it were, should put whatever twopenny charity they can afford into useful unity of action; and that, caring personally for no one, practically for every one, they should undertake “la spesa” of work that will pay no dividend on their twopences; but will both produce and pour oil and wine where they are most wanted. And I do solemnly propose that the St. George’s company in England, and (please the University of Padua) a St. Anthony’s company in Italy, should positively buy such bits of barren ground as this farmer’s at Verona, and make the most of them that agriculture and engineering can.

VENICE, 23rd June.

My letter will be a day or two late, I fear, after all; for I can't write this morning, because of the accursed whistling of the dirty steam-engine of the omnibus for Lido, waiting at the quay of the Ducal Palace for the dirty population of Venice, which is now neither fish nor flesh, neither noble nor fisherman—cannot afford to be rowed, nor has strength nor sense enough to row itself; but smokes and spits up and down the piazzetta all day, and gets itself dragged by a screaming kettle to Lido next morning, to sea-bathe itself into capacity for more tobacco.

Yet I am grateful to the Third Fors for stopping my revise; because just as I was passing by Padua yesterday I chanced upon this fact, which I had forgotten (do me the grace to believe that I knew it twenty years ago), in Antonio Caccianiga's *Vita Campestre*.* The Venetian Republic founded in Padua—(wait a minute; for the pigeons are come to my window-sill and I must give them some breakfast)—“founded in Padua, in 1765, the first chair of rural economy appointed in Italy, annexed to it a piece of ground destined for the study, and called Peter Ardouin, a Veronese botanist, to honour the school with his lectures.”

Yes; that is all very fine; nevertheless, I am not quite sure that rural economy, during the 1760 years previous,

* Second Edition, Milan, 1870. (FRATELLI RECHIADEI), p. 86.

had not done pretty well without a chair, and on its own legs. For, indeed, since the beginning of those philosophies in the eighteenth century, the Venetian aristocracy has so ill prospered that instead of being any more able to give land at Padua, it cannot so much as keep a poor acre of it decent before its own Ducal Palace, in Venice; nor hinder this miserable mob, which has not brains enough to know so much as what o'clock it is, nor sense enough so much as to go aboard a boat without being whistled for like dogs, from choking the sweet sea air with pitch-black smoke, and filling it with entirely devilish noise, which no properly bred human being could endure within a quarter of a mile of them—that so they may be sufficiently assisted and persuaded to embark, for the washing of themselves, at the Palace quay.

It is a strange pass for things to have reached, under politic aristocracies and learned professors; but the policy and learning became useless, through the same kind of mistake on both sides. The professors of botany forgot that botany, in its original Greek, meant a science of things to be eaten; they pursued it only as a science of things to be named. And the politic aristocracy forgot that their own “bestness” consisted essentially in their being fit—in a figurative manner—to be eaten, and fancied rather that their superiority was of a titular character, and that the beauty and power of their order lay wholly in being fit to be—named.

I must go back to my wall-building, however, for a

minute or two more, because you might probably think that my answer to the farmer's objection about expense (even if I had possessed Italian enough to make it intelligible,) would have been an insufficient one; and that the operation of embanking hill-sides so as to stay the rain-flow, is a work of enormous cost and difficulty.

Indeed, a work productive of good so infinite as this would be, and contending for rule over the grandest forces of nature, cannot be altogether cheap, nor altogether facile. But spend annually one-tenth of the sum you now give to build embankments against imaginary enemies, in building embankments for the help of people whom you may easily make your real friends,—and see whether your budget does not become more satisfactory, so; and, above all, learn a little hydraulics.

I wasted some good time, a year or two since, over a sensational novel in one of our magazines, which I thought would tell me more of what the public were thinking about strikes than I could learn elsewhere. But it spent itself in dramatic effects with lucifer matches, and I learned nothing from it, and the public mislearned much. It ended, (no, I believe it didn't end,—but I read no farther,) with the bursting of a reservoir, and the floating away of a village. The hero, as far as I recollect, was in the half of a house which was just going to be washed down; and the anti-hero was opposite him, in the half of a tree which was just going to be torn up, and the heroine was floating between them down the stream, and one

wasn't to know, till next month, which would catch her. But the hydraulics were the essentially bad part of the book, for the author made great play with the tremendous weight of water against his embankment;—it never having occurred to him that the gate of a Liverpool dry dock can keep out—and could just as easily for that matter keep in, the Atlantic Ocean, to the necessary depth in feet and inches; the depth giving the pressure, not the superficies.

Nay, you may see, not unfrequently, on Margate sands, your own six-years-old engineers of children keep out the Atlantic ocean quite successfully, for a little while, from a favourite hole; the difficulty being not at all in keeping the Atlantic well out at the side, but from surreptitiously finding its way in at the bottom. And that is the real difficulty for old engineers; properly the only one; you must not let the Atlantic begin to run surreptitiously either in or out, else it soon becomes difficult to stop; and all reservoirs ought to be wide, not deep, when they are artificial, and should not be immediately above villages (though they might always be made perfectly safe merely by dividing them by walls, so that the contents could not run out all at once). But when reservoirs are *not* artificial, when the natural rocks, with adamantine wall, and embankment built up from the earth's centre, are ready to catch the rain for you, and render it back as pure as their own crystal,—if you will only here and there throw an iron valve across a cleft,—believe me—if you choose to have a dividend out of Heaven, and sell the Rain, you

may get it a good deal more easily and at a figure or two higher per cent. than you can on diaphanous mustard. There are certainly few men of my age who have watched the ways of Alpine torrents so closely as I have (and you need not think my knowing something of art prevents me from understanding them, for the first good canal-engineer in Italy was Lionardo da Vinci, and more drawings of water-wheels and water-eddies exist of his, by far, than studies of hair and eyes); and the one strong impression I have respecting them is their utter docility and passiveness, if you will educate them young. But our wise engineers invariably try to manage faggots instead of sticks; and, leaving the rivulets of the Viso without training, debate what bridle is to be put in the mouth of the Po! Which, by the way, is a *running* reservoir, considerably above the level of the plain of Lombardy; and if the bank of *that* one should break, any summer's day, there will be news of it, and more cities than Venice with water in their streets.

June 24th.

You must be content with a short letter (I wish I could flatter myself you would like a longer one) this month; but you will probably see some news of the weather here, yesterday afternoon, which will give some emphasis to what I have been saying, not for the first time by any means; and so I leave you to think of it, and remain

Faithfully yours,

J. RUSKIN.

LETTER XX.

MY FRIENDS,

VENICE, 3rd July, 1872.

You probably thought I had lost my temper, and written inconsiderately, when I called the whistling of the Lido steamer "accursed."

I never wrote more considerately; using the longer and weaker word "accursed" instead of the simpler and proper one, "cursed," to take away, as far as I could, the appearance of unseemly haste; and using the expression itself on set purpose, not merely as the fittest for the occasion, but because I have more to tell you respecting the general benediction engraved on the bell of Lucca, and the particular benediction bestowed on the Marquis of B.; several things more, indeed, of importance for you to know, about blessing and cursing.

Some of you may perhaps remember the saying of St. James about the tongue: "Therewith bless we God, and therewith curse we men; out of the same mouth proceedeth blessing and cursing. My brethren, these things ought not so to be."

It is not clear whether St. James means that there should be no cursing at all, (which I suppose he does,) or merely that the blessing and cursing should not be uttered by the same lips. But his meaning, whatever it was, did not, in the issue, matter; for the Church of

Christendom has always ignored this text altogether, and appointed the same persons in authority to deliver on all needful occasions, benediction or malediction, as either might appear to them due; while our own most learned sect, wielding State power, has not only appointed a formal service of malediction in Lent, but commanded the Psalms of David, in which the blessing and cursing are inlaid as closely as the black and white in a mosaic floor, to be solemnly sung through once a month.

I do not wish, however, to-day to speak to you of the practice of the churches; but of your own, which, observe, is in one respect singularly different. All the churches, of late years, paying less and less attention to the discipline of their people, have felt an increasing compunction in cursing them when they did wrong; while also, the wrong doing, through such neglect of discipline, becoming every day more complex, ecclesiastical authorities perceived that, if delivered with impartiality, the cursing must be so general, and the blessing so defined, as to give their services an entirely unpopular character.

Now, there is a little screw steamer just passing, with no deck, an omnibus cabin, a flag at both ends, and a single passenger; she is not twelve yards long, yet the beating of her screw has been so loud across the lagoon for the last five minutes, that I thought it must be a large new steamer coming in from the sea, and left my work to go and look.

Before I had finished writing that last sentence, the cry of a boy selling something black out of a basket on the quay became so sharply distinguished above the voices of the always-debating gondoliers, that I must needs stop again, and go down to the quay to see what he had got to sell. They were half rotten figs, shaken down, untimely, by the midsummer storms; his cry of "Fighiaie" scarcely ceased, being delivered, as I observed, just as clearly between his legs, when he was stooping to find an eatable portion of the black mess to serve a customer with, as when he was standing up. His face brought the tears into my eyes, so open, and sweet, and capable it was; and so sad. I gave him three very small halfpence, but took no figs, to his surprise: he little thought how cheap the sight of him and his basket was to me, at the money; nor what this fruit, "that could not be eaten, it was so evil," sold cheap before the palace of the Dukes of Venice, meant, to any one who could read signs, either in earth, or her heaven and sea.*

Well; the blessing, as I said, not being now often legitimately applicable to particular people by Christian priests, they gradually fell into the habit of giving it of pure grace and courtesy to their congregations; or more specially to poor persons, instead of money, or to rich ones, in exchange for it,—or generally to any

* "And the stars of heaven fell unto the earth, even as a fig-tree casteth her untimely figs, when she is shaken of a mighty wind."—Rev. VI. 13; compare Jerem. XXIV. 8, and Amos, VIII. 1 and 2.

one to whom they wish to be polite: while, on the contrary, the cursing, having now become widely applicable, and even necessary, was left to be understood, but not expressed; and at last, to all practical purpose, abandoned altogether, (the rather that it had become very disputable whether it ever did any one the least mischief); so that, at this time being, the Pope, in his charmingest manner, blesses the bridecake of the Marquis of B., making, as it it were, an ornamental confectionery figure of himself on the top of it; but has not, in any wise, courage to curse the King of Italy, although that penniless monarch has confiscated the revenues of every time-honoured religious institution in Italy: and is about, doubtless, to commission some of the Raphaels in attendance at his court, (though, I believe, grooms are more in request there), to paint an opposition fresco in the Vatican, representing the Sardinian instead of the Syrian Heliodorus, successfully abstracting the treasures of the temple, and triumphantly putting its angels to flight.

Now the curious difference between your practice, and the church's, to which I wish to-day to direct your attention, is, that while thus the clergy, in what efforts they make to retain their influence over human mind, use cursing little, and blessing much, you working-men more and more frankly every day adopt the exactly contrary practice of using benediction little, and cursing much: so that, even in the ordinary course of conversation among your-

selves, you very rarely bless, audibly, so much as one of your own children ; but not unfrequently damn, audibly, them, yourselves, and your friends.

I wish you to think over the meaning of this habit of yours very carefully with me. I call it a habit of *yours*, observe, only with reference to your recent adoption of it. You have learned it from your superiors ; but they, partly in consequence of your too eager imitation of them, are beginning to mend their manners ; and it would excite much surprise, now-a-days, in any European court, to hear the reigning monarch address the heir-apparent on an occasion of state festivity, as a Venetian ambassador heard our James the First address Prince Charles,—“ Devil take you, why don’t you dance ? ” But, strictly speaking, the prevalence of the habit among all classes of laymen is the point in question.

4th July.

And first, it is necessary that you should understand accurately the difference between swearing and cursing, vulgarly so often confounded. They are entirely different things ; the first is invoking the witness of a Spirit to an assertion you wish to make ; the second is invoking the assistance of a Spirit, in a mischief you wish to inflict. When ill-educated and ill-tempered people clamorously confuse the two invocations, they are not, in reality, either cursing or swearing ; but merely vomiting empty words indecently. True swearing and cursing must always be distinct and solemn ; here is an old Latin oath, for instance,

which, though borrowed from a stronger Greek one, and much diluted, is still grand:

“I take to witness the Earth, and the stars, and the sea; the two lights of heaven; the falling and rising of the year; the dark power of the gods of sorrow; the sacredness of unbending Death; and may the father of all things hear me, who sanctifies covenants with his lightning. For I lay my hand on the altar, and by the fires thereon, and the gods to whom they burn, I swear that no future day shall break this peace for Italy, nor violate the covenant she has made.”

That is old swearing: but the lengthy forms of it appearing partly burdensome to the celerity, and partly superstitious to the wisdom, of modern minds, have been abridged,—in England, for the most part, into the extremely simple “By God;” in France into “Sacred name of God” (often the first word of the sentence only pronounced), and in Italy into “Christ” or “Bacchus;” the superiority of the former Deity being indicated by omitting the preposition before the name. The oaths are “Christ,”—never “by Christ;” and “by Bacchus,”—never “Bacchus.”

Observe also that swearing is only by extremely ignorant persons supposed to be an infringement of the Third Commandment. It is disobedience to the teaching of Christ; but the Third Commandment has nothing to do with the matter. People do not take the name of God in vain when they swear; they use it, on the contrary, very

earnestly and energetically to attest what they wish to say. But when the Monster Concert at Boston begins, on the English day, with the hymn, "The will of God be done," while the audience know perfectly well that there is not one in a thousand of them who is trying to do it, or who would have it done, if he could help it, unless it was his own will too—*that* is taking the name of God in vain, with a vengeance.

Cursing, on the other hand, is invoking the aid of a Spirit to a harm you wish to see accomplished, but which is too great for your own immediate power: and to-day I wish to point out to you what intensity of faith in the existence and activity of a spiritual world is evinced by the curse which is characteristic of the English tongue.

For, observe, habitual as it has become, there is still so much life and sincerity in the expression, that we all feel our passion partly appeased in its use; and the more serious the occasion, the more practical and effective the cursing becomes. In Mr. Kinglake's "History of the Crimean War," you will find the —th Regiment at Alma is stated to have been materially assisted in maintaining position quite vital to the battle by the steady imprecation delivered at it by its colonel for half-an-hour on end. No quantity of benediction would have answered the purpose; the colonel might have said, "Bless you, my children," in the tenderest tones, as often as he pleased,—yet not have helped his men to keep their ground.

I want you, therefore, first to consider how it happens

that cursing seems at present the most effectual means for encouraging human work ; and whether it may not be conceivable that the work itself is of a kind which any form of effectual blessing would hinder instead of help. Then, secondly, I want you to consider what faith in a spiritual world is involved in the terms of the curse we usually employ. It has two principal forms ; one complete and unqualified, "God damn your soul," implying that the soul is there, and that we cannot be satisfied with less than its destruction : the other, qualified, and on the bodily members only ; "God damn your eyes and limbs." It is this last form I wish especially to examine.

For how do you suppose that either eye, or ear, or limb, *can* be damned ? What is the spiritual mischief you invoke ? Not merely the blinding of the eye, nor palsy of the limb ; but the condemnation or judgment of them. And remember that though you are for the most part unconscious of the spiritual meaning of what you say, the instinctive satisfaction you have in saying it is as much a real movement of the spirit within you, as the beating of your heart is a real movement of the body, though you are unconscious of that also, till you put your hand on it. Put your hand also, so to speak, upon the source of the satisfaction with which you use this curse ; and ascertain the law of it.

Now this you may best do by considering what it is which will make the eyes and the limbs blessed. For the precise contrary of that must be their damnation. . . What

do you think was the meaning of that saying of Christ's "Blessed are the eyes which see the things that ye see?" For to be made evermore incapable of seeing such things, must be the condemnation of the eyes. It is not merely the capacity of seeing sunshine, which is their blessing; but of seeing certain things under the sunshine; nay, perhaps, even without sunshine, the eye itself becoming a Sun. Therefore, on the other hand, the curse upon the eyes will not be mere blindness to the daylight, but blindness to particular things under the daylight; so that, when directed towards these, the eye itself becomes as the Night.

Again, with regard to the limbs, or general powers of the body. Do you suppose that when it is promised that "the lame man shall leap as an hart, and the tongue of the dumb sing"—(Steam-whistle interrupts me from the *Capo d' Istria*, which is lying in front of my window with her black nose pointed at the red nose of another steamer at the next pier. There are nine large ones at this instant,—half-past six, morning, 4th July,—lying between the Church of the Redeemer and the Canal of the Arsenal; one of them an iron-clad, five smoking fiercely, and the biggest,—English, and half-a-quarter of a mile long—blowing steam from all manner of pipes in her sides, and with such a roar through her funnel,—whistle number two from *Capo d' Istria*—that I could not make any one hear me speak in this room without an effort,)—do you suppose, I say, that such a form of benediction is just the same as saying that the lame man shall leap as a lion, and the

tongue of the dumb mourn? Not so, but a special manner of action of the members is meant in both cases: (whistle number three from *Capo d' Istria*; I am writing on, steadily, so that you will be able to form an accurate idea, from this page, of the intervals of time in modern music. The roaring from the English boat goes on all the while, for bass to the *Capo d' Istria's* treble, and a tenth steamer comes in sight round the Armenian Monastery)—a particular kind of activity is meant, I repeat, in both cases. The lame man is to leap, (whistle fourth from *Capo d' Istria*, this time at high pressure, going through my head like a knife,) as an innocent and joyful creature leaps, and the lips of the dumb to move melodiously: they are to be blest, so; may not be unblest even in silence; but are the absolute contrary of blest, in evil utterance. (Fifth whistle, a double one, from *Capo d' Istria*, and it is seven o'clock, nearly; and here's my coffee, and I must stop writing. Sixth whistle—the *Capo d' Istria* is off, with her crew of morning bathers. Seventh,—from I don't know which of the boats outside—and I count no more.)

5th July.

Yesterday, in those broken sentences, I tried to make you understand that for all human creatures there are necessarily three separate states; life positive, under blessing;—life negative, under curse;—and death, neutral between these: and, henceforward, take due note of the quite true assumption you make in your ordinary malediction

that the state of condemnation may begin in this world, and separately affect every living member of the body.

You assume the fact of these two opposite states, then ; but you have no idea whatever of the meaning of your words, nor of the nature of the blessedness or condemnation you admit. I will try to make your conception clearer.

In the year 1869, just before leaving Venice, I had been carefully looking at a picture by Victor Carpaccio, representing the dream of a young princess. Carpaccio has taken much pains to explain to us, as far as he can, the kind of life she leads, by completely painting her little bedroom in the light of dawn, so that you can see everything in it. It is lighted by two doubly-arched windows, the arches being painted crimson round their edges, and the capitals of the shafts that bear them, gilded. They are filled at the top with small round panes of glass ; but beneath, are open to the blue morning sky, with a low lattice across them ; and in the one at the back of the room are set two beautiful white Greek vases with a plant in each ; one having rich dark and pointed green leaves, the other crimson flowers, but not of any species known to me, each at the end of a branch like a spray of heath.

These flower-pots stand on a shelf which runs all round the room, and beneath the window, at about the height of the elbow, and serves to put things on anywhere : beneath it, down to the floor, the walls are covered with green cloth ; but above, are bare and white. The second win-

dow is nearly opposite the bed, and in front of it is the princess's reading-table, some two feet and a half square, covered by a red cloth with a white border and dainty fringe: and beside it her seat, not at all like a reading chair in Oxford, but a very small three-legged stool like a music-stool, covered with crimson cloth. On the table are a book set up at a slope fittest for reading, and an hour-glass. Under the shelf, near the table, so as to be easily reached by the outstretched arm, is a press full of books. The door of this has been left open, and the books, I am grieved to say, are rather in disorder, having been pulled about before the princess went to bed, and one left standing on its side.

Opposite this window, on the white wall, is a small shrine or picture (I can't see which, for it is in sharp retiring perspective), with a lamp before it, and a silver vessel hung from the lamp, looking like one for holding incense.

The bed is a broad four-poster, the posts being beautifully wrought golden or gilded rods, variously wreathed and branched, carrying a canopy of warm red. The princess's shield is at the head of it, and the feet are raised entirely above the floor of the room, on a dais which projects at the lower end so as to form a seat, on which the child has laid her crown. Her little blue slippers lie at the side of the bed,—her white dog beside them. The coverlid is scarlet, the white sheet folded half way back over it; the young girl lies straight, bending neither at waist

nor knee, the sheet rising and falling over her in a narrow unbroken wave, like the shape of the coverlid of the last sleep, when the turf scarcely rises. She is some seventeen or eighteen years old, her head is turned towards us on the pillow, the cheek resting on her hand, as if she were thinking, yet utterly calm in sleep, and almost colourless. Her hair is tied with a narrow riband, and divided into two wreaths, which encircle her head like a double crown. The white nightgown hides the arm raised on the pillow, down to the wrist.

At the door of the room an angel enters ; (the little dog, though lying awake, vigilant, takes no notice.) . He is a very small angel, his head just rises a little above the shelf round the room, and would only reach as high as the princess's chin, if she were standing up. He has soft grey wings, lustreless ; and his dress, of subdued blue, has violet sleeves, open above the elbow, and showing white sleeves below. He comes in without haste, his body, like a mortal one, casting shadow from the light through the door behind, his face perfectly quiet ; a palm-branch in his right hand—a scroll in his left.

So dreams the princess, with blessed eyes, that need no earthly dawn. It is very pretty of Carpaccio to make her dream out the angel's dress so particularly, and notice the slashed sleeves ; and to dream so little an angel—very nearly a doll angel,—bringing her the branch of palm, and message. But the lovely characteristic of all is the evident delight of her continual life. Royal power

over herself, and happiness in her flowers, her books, her sleeping and waking, her prayers, her dreams, her earth, her heaven.

After I had spent my morning over this picture, I had to go to Verona by the afternoon train. In the carriage with me were two American girls with their father and mother, people of the class which has lately made so much money suddenly, and does not know what to do with it: and these two girls, of about fifteen and eighteen, had evidently been indulged in everything, (since they had had the means,) which western civilization could imagine. And here they were, specimens of the utmost which the money and invention of the nineteenth century could produce in maidenhood,—children of its most progressive race,—enjoying the full advantages of political liberty, of enlightened philosophical education, of cheap pilfered literature, and of luxury at any cost. Whatever money, machinery, or freedom of thought, could do for these two children, had been done. No superstition had deceived, no restraint degraded them:—types, they could not but be, of maidenly wisdom and felicity, as conceived by the forwardest intellects of our time.

And they were travelling through a district which, if any in the world, should touch the hearts and delight the eyes of young girls. Between Venice and Verona! Portia's villa perhaps in sight upon the Brenta,—Juliet's tomb to be visited in the evening,—blue against the southern sky, the hills of Petrarch's home. Exquisite midsummer

sunshine, with low rays, glanced through the vine-leaves ; all the Alps were clear, from the lake of Garda to Cadore, and to farthest Tyrol. What a princess's chamber, this, if these are princesses, and what dreams might they not dream, therein !

But the two American girls were neither princesses, nor seers, nor dreamers. By infinite self-indulgence, they had reduced themselves simply to two pieces of white putty that could feel pain. The flies and the dust stuck to them as to clay, and they perceived, between Venice and Verona, nothing but the flies and the dust. They pulled down the blinds the moment they entered the carriage, and then sprawled, and writhed, and tossed among the cushions of it, in vain contest, during the whole fifty miles, with every miserable sensation of bodily affliction that could make time intolerable. They were dressed in thin white frocks, coming vaguely open at the backs as they stretched or wriggled ; they had French novels, lemons, and lumps of sugar, to beguile their state with ; the novels hanging together by the ends of string that had once stitched them, or adhering at the corners in densely bruised dog's-ears, out of which the girls, wetting their fingers, occasionally extricated a gluey leaf. From time to time they cut a lemon open, ground a lump of sugar backwards and forwards over it till every fibre was in a treacly pulp ; then sucked the pulp, and gnawed the white skin into leathery strings, for the sake of its bitter. Only one sentence was exchanged, in the fifty miles, on the

subject of things outside the carriage (the Alps being once visible from a station where they had drawn up the blinds).

“Don’t those snow-caps make you cool?”

“No—I wish they did.”

And so they went their way, with sealed eyes and tormented limbs, their numbered miles of pain.

There are the two states for you, in clearest opposition; Blessed, and Accursed. The happy industry, and eyes full of sacred imagination of things that are not, (such sweet cosa, *à la fede*,) and the tortured indolence, and infidel eyes, blind even to the things that are.

“How do I know the princess is industrious?”

Partly by the trim state of her room,—by the hour-glass on the table,—by the evident use of all the books she has, (well bound, every one of them, in stoutest leather or velvet, and with no dog’s-ears), but more distinctly from another picture of her, not asleep. In that one, a prince of England has sent to ask her in marriage: and her father, little liking to part with her, sends for her to his room to ask her what she would do. He sits, moody and sorrowful; she, standing before him in a plain housewifely dress, talks quietly, going on with her needlework all the time.

A work-woman, friends, she, no less than a princess; and princess most in being so. In like manner, in a picture by a Florentine, whose mind I would fain have you know somewhat, as well as Carpaccio’s—Sandro

Botticelli—the girl who is to be the wife of Moses, when he first sees her at the desert-well, has fruit in her left hand, but a distaff in her right.*

“To do good work, whether you live or die,” it is the entrance to all Princedoms ; and if not done, the day will come, and that infallibly, when you must labour for evil instead of good.

It was some comfort to me, that second of May last, at Pisa, to watch the workman’s ashamed face, as he struck the old marble cross to pieces. Stolidly and languidly he dealt the blows,—down-looking,—so far as in any wise sensitive, ashamed,—and well he might be.

It was a wonderful thing to see done. This Pisan chapel, first built in 1230, then called the Oracle, or Oratory,—“*Oraculum, vel Oratorium*”—of the Blessed Mary of the New Bridge, afterwards called the Sea-bridge, (*Ponte-a-Mare*), was a shrine like that of ours on the bridge of Wakefield ; a boatman’s praying-place : you may still see, or might, ten years since, have seen, the use of such a thing at the mouth of Boulogne Harbour, when the mackerel boats went out in a fleet at early dawn. There used to be a little shrine at the end of the longest pier ; and as the *Bonne Espérance*, or *Grâce-de-Dieu*, or *Vierge Marie*, or *Notre Dame des Dunes*, or *Reine des Anges*, rose on the first surge of the open sea, their crews

* More accurately a rod cloven into three at the top, and so holding the wool. The fruit is a branch of apples ; she has golden sardals, and a wreath of myrtle round her hair.

bared their heads, and prayed for a few seconds. So also the Pisan oarsmen looked back to their shrine, many-pinnacled, standing out from the quay above the river, as they dropped down Arno under their sea bridge, bound for the Isles of Greece. Later, in the fifteenth century, "there was laid up in it a little branch of the Crown of Thorns of the Redeemer, which a merchant had brought home, enclosed in a little urn of Beyond-sea" (ultramarine) and its name was changed to "St. Mary's of the Thorn."

In the year 1840 I first drew it, then as perfect as when it was built. Six hundred and ten years had only given the marble of it a tempered glow, or touched its sculpture here and there, with softer shade. I daguerretyped the eastern end of it some years later, (photography being then unknown), and copied the daguerreotype, that people might not be plagued in looking, by the lustre. The frontispiece to this letter is engraved from the drawing, and will show you what the building was like.

But the last quarter of a century has brought changes, and made the Italians wiser. British Protestant missionaries explained to them that they had only got a piece of blackberry stem in their ultramarine box. German philosophical missionaries explained to them that the Crown of Thorns itself was only a graceful metaphor. French republican missionaries explained to them that chapels were inconsistent with liberty on the quay; and their own Engineering missionaries of civilization explained to them

that steam-power was independent of the Madonna. And now in 1872, rowing by steam, digging by steam, driving by steam, here, behold, are a troublesome pair of human arms out of employ. So the Engineering missionaries fit them with hammer and chisel, and set them to break up the Spina Chapel.

A costly kind of stone-breaking, this, for Italian parishes to set paupers on! Are there not rocks enough of Apennine, think you, they could break down instead? For truly, the God of their Fathers, and of their land, would rather see them mar His own work, than His children's.

Believe me, faithfully yours,

JOHN RUSKIN.

LETTER XXI.

DULWICH,

10th August, 1872.

MY FRIENDS,

I HAVE not yet fully treated the subject of my last letter, for I must show you how things, as well as people, may be blessed, or cursed; and to show you that, I must explain to you the story of Achan the son of Carmi, which, too probably, you don't feel at present any special interest in; as well as several matters more about steam-engines and steam-whistling: but, in the meantime, here is my lost bit of letter from Florence, written in continuation of the June number; and it is well that it should be put into place at once, (I see that it notices, incidentally, some of the noises in Florence, which might with advantage cease) since it answers the complaints of two aggrieved readers.

FLORENCE, 10th June, 1872.

In the page for correspondence you will find a letter from a workman, interesting in many respects; and besides, sufficiently representing the kind of expostulation now constantly made with me, on my not advertising either these letters, or any other of my writings. These remonstrances, founded as they always are, very politely,

on the assumption that every one who reads my books derives extraordinary benefit from them, require from me at least, the courtesy of more definite answer than I have hitherto found time to give.

In the first place, my correspondents write under the conviction,—a very natural one,—that no individual practice can have the smallest power to change or check the vast system of modern commerce, or the methods of its transaction.

I, on the contrary, am convinced that it is by his personal conduct that any man of ordinary power will do the greatest amount of good that is in him to do; and when I consider the quantity of wise talking which has passed in at one long ear of the world, and out at the other, without making the smallest impression upon its mind, I am sometimes tempted for the rest of my life to try and do what seems to me rational; silently; and speak no more.

But were it only for the exciting of earnest talk, action is highly desirable, and is, in itself, advertisement of the best. If, for instance, I had only written in these letters that I disapproved of advertisements, and had gone on advertising the letters themselves, you would have passed by my statement contemptuously, as one in which I did not believe myself. But now, most of my readers are interested in the opinion, dispute it eagerly, and are ready to hear patiently what I can say in its defence.

For main defence of it, I reply (now definitely to my

correspondent of the Black Country). You ought to read books, as you take medicine, by advice, and not advertisement. Perhaps, however, you *do* take medicine by advertisement, but you will not, I suppose, venture to call that a wise proceeding? Every good physician, at all events, knows it to be an unwise one, and will by no means consent to proclaim even his favourite pills by the town-crier. But perhaps you have no literary physician,—no friend to whom you can go and say, “I want to learn what is true on such a subject—what book must I read?” You prefer exercising your independent judgment, and you expect me to appeal to it, by paying for the insertion in all the penny papers of a paragraph that may win your confidence. As for instance, “Just published, the —th number of ‘*Fors Clavigera*,’ containing the most important information on the existing state of trade in Europe; and on all subjects interesting to the British Operative. Thousandth thousand. Price 7*d.* 7 for 3*s.* 6*d.* Proportional abatement on large orders. No intelligent workman should pass a day without acquainting himself with the entirely original views contained in these pages.”

You don’t want to be advised in that manner, do you say? but only to know that such a book exists. What good would its existence do you, if you did not know whether it was worth reading? Were you as rich as Croesus, you have no business to spend such a sum as 7*d.* unless you are sure of your money’s worth. Ask some one who knows good books from bad ones to tell you what to

buy, and be content. You will hear of *Fors*, so, in time ; —if it be worth hearing of.

But you have no acquaintance, you say, among people who know good books from bad ones ? Possibly not ; and yet, half the poor gentlemen of England are fain now-a-days to live by selling their opinions on this subject. It is a bad trade, let me tell them. Whatever judgment they have, likely to be useful to the human beings about them, may be expressed in few words ; and those words of sacred advice ought not to be articles of commerce. Least of all ought they to be so ingeniously concocted that idle readers may remain content with reading their eloquent account of a book, instead of the book itself. It is an evil trade, and in our company of Mont Rose, we will have no reviewers ; we will have, once for all, our book Gazette, issued every 1st of January, naming, under alphabetical list of authors and of titles, whatever serviceable or worthy writings have been published during the past year ; and if, in the space of the year following, we have become acquainted with the same thoroughly, our time will not have been ill-spent, though we hear of no new book for twelve months. And the choice of the books to be named, as well as the brief accounts of them given in our Gazette, will be by persons not paid for their opinions, and who will not, therefore, express themselves voluminously.

Meantime, your newspapers being your present advisers, I beg you to observe that a number of *Fors* is duly sent to all the principal ones, whose editors may notice it.

if they choose ; but I will not pay for their notice, nor for any man's.

These, then, are my immediate reasons for not advertising. Indirect ones, I have, which weigh with me no less. I write this morning, wearily, and without spirit, being nearly deaf with the bell-ringing and bawling which goes on here, at Florence, ceaselessly, in advertisement of prayers, and wares ; as if people could not wait on God for what they wanted, but God had to ring for them, like waiters, for what *He* wanted : and as if they could think of nothing they were in need of, till the need was suggested to them by bellowing at their doors, or bill-posting on their house-corners. Indeed, the fresco-painting of the bill-sticker is likely, so far as I see, to become the principal fine art of modern Europe : here, at all events, it is now the principal source of street effect. Giotto's time is past, like Oderigi's ; but the bill-poster succeeds : and the Ponte Vecchio, the principal thoroughfare across the Arno, is on one side plastered over with bills in the exact centre, while the other side, for various reasons not to be specified, is little available to passengers.

The bills on the bridge are theatrical, announcing cheap operas ; but religious bills, inviting to ecclesiastical festivities, are similarly plastered over the front of the church once called " the Bride " for its beauty ; and the pious bill-stickers paste them ingeniously in and out upon sculptured bearings of the shields of the old Florentine knights. Political bills, in various stages of decomposi

tion, decorate the street-corners and sheds of the markets ; and among the last year's rags of these, one may still read here and there the heroic apostrophe, "Rome ! or Death."

It never was clear to me, until now, what the desperately-minded persons who found themselves in that dilemma, wanted with Rome ; and now it is quite clear to me that they never *did* want it,—but only the ground it was once built on, for finance offices and railroad stations ; or, it may be, for new graves, when Death, to young Italy, as to old, comes *without* alternative. For, indeed, young Italy has just chosen the most precious piece of ground above Florence, and a twelfth-century church in the midst of it, to bury itself in, at its leisure ; and make the summer air loathsome and pestiferous, from San Miniato to Arcetri.

No Rome, I repeat, did young Italy want ; but only the site of Rome. Three days before I left it, I went to see a piece not merely of the rampart, but of the actual wall, of Tullius, which zealous Mr. Parker with fortunate excavation has just laid open on the Aventine. Fifty feet of blocks of massy stone, duly laid ; not one shifted ; a wall which was just eighteen hundred years old when Westminster Abbey was begun building. I went to see it mainly for your sakes, for after I have got past Theseus and his vegetable soup, I shall have to tell you something of the constitutions of Servius Tullius ; and besides, from the sweet slope of vineyard beneath this king's wall, one

looks across the fields where Cincinnatus was found ploughing, according to Livy; though, you will find, in Smith's Dictionary, that Mr. Niebuhr "has pointed out all the inconsistencies and impossibilities in this legend;" and that he is "inclined to regard it as altogether fabulous."

Very possibly it may be so, (not that for my own poor part, I attach much importance to Niebuhr's "inclinations,") but it is fatally certain that whenever you begin to seek the real authority for legends, you will generally find that the ugly ones have good foundation, and the beautiful ones none. Be prepared for this; and remember that a lovely legend is all the more precious when it *has* no foundation. Cincinnatus might actually have been found ploughing beside the Tiber fifty times over; and it might have signified little to any one;—least of all to you or me. But if Cincinnatus never was so found, nor ever existed at all in flesh and blood; but the great Roman nation, in its strength of conviction that manual labour in tilling the ground was good and honourable, invented a quite bodiless Cincinnatus; and set him, according to its fancy, in furrows of the field, and put its own words into his mouth, and gave the honour of its ancient deeds into his ghostly hand; *this* fable, which has no foundation;—this precious coinage of the brain and conscience of a mighty people, you and I—believe me—had better read, and know, and take to heart, diligently.

Of which at another time: the point in question just

now being that this same slope of the Aventine, under the wall of Tullius, falling to the shore of Tiber just where the Roman galleys used to be moored, (the marbles worn by the cables are still in the bank of it there), and opposite the farm of Cincinnatus, commands, as you may suppose, fresh air and a fine view,—and has just been sold on “building leases.”

Sold, I heard, to an English company; but more probably to the agents of the society which is gradually superseding, with its splendid bills at all the street corners, the last vestiges of “Roma, o morte,”—the “Società Anonima,” for providing lodgings for company in Rome.

Now this anonymous society, which is about to occupy itself in rebuilding Rome, is of course composed of persons who know nothing whatever about building. They also care about it as little as they know; but they take to building, because they expect to get interest for their money by such operation. Some of them, doubtless, are benevolent persons, who expect to benefit Italy by building, and think that, the more the benefit, the larger will be the dividend. Generally the public notion of such a society would be that it was getting interest for its money in a most legitimate way, by doing useful work, and that Roman comfort and Italian prosperity would be largely promoted by it.

But observe in what its dividends will consist. Knowing nothing about architecture, nor caring, it neither can

choose, nor will desire to choose, an architect of merit. It will give its business to the person whom it supposes able to build the most attractive mansions at the least cost. Practically, the person who can and will do so, is the architect who knows where to find the worst bricks, the worst iron, and the worst workmen, and who has mastered the cleverest tricks by which to turn these to account. He will turn them to account by giving the external effect to his edifices which he finds likely to be attractive to the majority of the public in search of lodging. He will have stucco mouldings, veneered balconies, and cast-iron pillars; but, as his own commission will be paid on the outlay, he will assuredly make the building costly in some way or other; and he can make it costly with least trouble to himself by putting into it, somewhere, vast masses of merely squared stone, chiselled so as to employ handicraftsmen on whose wages commission can be charged, and who all the year round may be doing the same thing, without giving any trouble by asking for directions. Hence there will be assuredly in the new buildings an immense mass of merely squared or rusticated stones; for these appear magnificent to the public mind,—need no trouble in designing,—and pay a vast commission on the execution.

The interior apartments will, of course, be made as luxurious as possible; for the taste of the European public is at present practically directed by women of the town; these having the government of the richest of our

youth at the time when they spend most freely. And at the very time when the last vestiges of the heroic works of the Roman Monarchy are being destroyed, the *base fresco-painting of the worst times of the Empire is being faithfully copied*, with perfectly true lascivious instinct, for interior decoration.

Of such architecture the anonymous society will produce the most it can; and lease it at the highest rents it can; and advertise and extend itself, so as, if possible, at last to rebuild, after its manner, all the great cities of Italy. Now the real moving powers at the bottom of all this are essentially the vanity and lust of the middle classes, all of them seeking to live, if it may be, in a cheap palace, with as much cheap pleasure as they can have in it, and the airs of great people. By 'cheap' pleasure, I mean, as I will show you in explaining the nature of cursed things, pleasure which has not been won by attention, or deserved by toil, but is snatched or forced by wanton passion. But the mechanical power which gives effect to this vanity and lust, is the instinct of the anonymous society, and of other such, to get a dividend by catering for them.

It has chanced, by help of the third Fors, (as again and again in the course of these letters the thing to my purpose has been brought before me just when I needed it), that having to speak of interest of money, and first of the important part of it consisting in rents, I should be able to lay my finger on the point of land in all Europe

where the principle of it is, at this moment, doing the most mischief. But, of course, all our great building work is now carried on in the same way; nor will any architecture, properly so called, be now possible for many years in Europe. For true architecture is a thing which puts its builders to cost—not which pays them dividends. If a society chose to organize itself to build the most beautiful houses, and the strongest that it could, either for art's sake, or love's; either palaces for itself, or houses for the poor; such a society would build something worth looking at, but not get dividends. True architecture is built by the man who wants a house for himself, and builds it to his own liking, at his own cost; not for his own gain, to the liking of other people.

All orders of houses may be beautiful when they are thus built by their master to his own liking. Three streets from me, at this moment, is one of the sixteenth century. The corner stones of it are ten feet long, by three broad, and two thick—fifty courses of such, and the cornice; flawless stones, laid as level as a sea horizon, so that the walls become one solid mass of unalterable rock,—four grey cliffs set square in mid-Florence, some hundred-and-twenty feet from cornice to ground. The man who meant to live in it built it so; and Titian painted his little grand-daughter for him. He got no dividend by his building—no profit on his picture. House and picture, absolutely untouched by time, remain to this day.

On the hills about me at Coniston there are also houses

built by their owners, according to their means, and pleasure. A few loose stones gathered out of the fields, set one above another to a man's height from the ground; a branch or two of larch, set gable-wise across them,—on these, some turf cut from the next peat moss. It is enough: the owner gets no dividend on his building; but he has covert from wind and rain, and is honourable among the sons of Earth. He has built as best he could, to his own mind.

You think that there ought to be no such differences in habitation; that nobody should live in a palace, and nobody under a heap of turf? But if ever you become educated enough to know something about the arts, you will like to see a palace built in noble manner; and if ever you become educated enough to know something about men, you will love some of them so well as to desire that at least they should live in palaces, though you cannot. But it will be long now before you can know much, either about arts or men. The one point you may be assured of is, that your happiness does not at all depend on the size of your house—(or, if it does, rather on its smallness than largeness); but depends entirely on your having peaceful and safe possession of it—on your habits of keeping it clean and in order—on the materials of it being trustworthy, if they are no more than stone and turf—and on your contentment with it, so that gradually you may mend it to your mind, day by day, and leave it to your children a better house than it was.

To your children, and to theirs, desiring for them that they may live as you have lived ; and not strive to forget you, and stammer when any one asks who you were, because, forsooth, they have become fine folks by your help.

EUSTON HOTEL, 18th August.

Thus far I had written at Florence. To-day I received a severe lesson from a friend whose teaching is always serviceable to me, of which the main effect was to show me that I had been wrong in allowing myself so far in the habit of jesting, either in these letters, or in any other of my books on grave subjects ; and that although what little play I had permitted, rose, as I told you before, out of the nature of the things spoken of, it prevented many readers from understanding me rightly, and was an offence to others. The second effect of the lesson was to show me how vain it was, in the present state of English literature and mind, to expect anybody to attend to the real force of the words I wrote ; and that it would be better to spare myself much of the trouble I took in choosing them, and try to get things explained by reiteration instead of precision, or, if I was too proud to do that, to write less myself, and only urge your attention, or aid it, to other people's happier sayings. Which indeed I meant to do, as *Fors* went on ; for I have always thought that more true force of persuasion might be obtained by rightly choosing and arranging what others have said, than by painfully

saying it again in one's own way. And since as to the matter which I have to teach you, all the great writers and thinkers of the world are agreed, without any exception whatsoever, it is certain I can teach you better in other men's words than my own, if I can lay my hand at once on what I want of them. And the upshot of the lesson, and of my meditation upon it, is, that henceforward to the end of the year I will try very seriously to explain, as I promised, step by step, the things put questionably in last year's letters. We will conclude therefore first, and as fast as we can, the debate respecting interest of money which was opened in my letter of January, 1871.

An impatient correspondent of mine, Mr. W. C. Sillar, who has long been hotly engaged in testifying publicly against the wickedness of taking interest, writes to me that all I say is mysterious, that I am bound to speak plainly, and above everything, if I think taking interest sinful, not to hold bank stock.

Once for all, then, Mr. Sillar is wholly right as to the abstract fact that lending for gain is sinful ; and he has in various pamphlets, shown unanswerably that whatever is said either in the Bible, or in any other good and ancient book, respecting usury, is intended by the writers to apply to the receiving of interest, be it ever so little. But Mr. Sillar has allowed this idea to take possession of him, body and soul ; and is just as fondly enthusiastic about abolition of usury as some other people are about the liquor laws. Now of course drunkenness is mischievous, and usury is

mischievous, and whoredom is mischievous, and idleness is mischievous. But we cannot reform the world by preaching temperance only, nor refusal of interest only, nor chastity only, nor industry only. I am myself more set on teaching healthful industry than anything else, as the beginning of all redemption ; then, purity of heart and body ; if I can get these taught, I know that nobody so taught will either get drunk, or, in any unjust manner, “either a borrower or a lender be.” But I expect also far higher results than either of these, on which, being utterly bent, I am very careless about such minor matters as the present conditions either of English brewing or banking. I hold bank stock simply because I suppose it to be safer than any other stock, and I take the interest of it, because though taking interest is, in the abstract, as wrong as war, the entire fabric of society is at present so connected with both usury and war, that it is not possible violently to withdraw, nor wisely to set example of withdrawing, from either evil. I entirely, in the abstract, disapprove of war ; yet have the profoundest sympathy with Colonel Yea and his fusiliers at Alma, and only wish I had been there with them. I have by no means equal sympathy either with bankers or landlords ; but am certain that for the present it is better that I receive my dividends as usual, and that Miss Hill should continue to collect my rents in Marylebone.

“Ananias over again, or worse,” Mr. Sillar will probably exclaim, when he reads this, and invoke lightning

against me I will abide the issue of his invocation, and only beg him to observe respecting either ancient or modern denunciations of interest, that they are much beside the mark unless they are accompanied with some explanation of the manner in which borrowing and lending, when necessary, can be carried on without it. Neither *are* often necessary in healthy states of society; but they always must remain so to some extent; and the name "Mount of Pity," * given still in French and Italian to the pawnbroker's shop, descends from a time when lending to the poor was as much a work of mercy as giving to them. And both lending and borrowing are virtuous, when the borrowing is prudent, and the lending kind; how much otherwise than kind lending at interest usually is, you, I suppose, do not need to be told; but how much otherwise than prudent nearly all borrowing is, and above everything, trade on a large scale on borrowed capital, it is very necessary for us all to be told. And for a beginning of other people's words, here are some quoted by Mr. Sillar from a work on the Labour question recently published in

* The "Mount" is the heap of money in store for lending without interest. You shall have a picture of it in next number, as drawn by a brave landscape painter four hundred years ago; and it will ultimately be one of the crags of our own Mont Rose; and well should be, for it was first raised among the rocks of Italy by a Franciscan monk, for refuge to the poor against the usury of the Lombard merchants who gave name to our Lombard Street, and perished by their usury, as their successors are like enough to do also. But the story goes back to Friedrich II. of Germany again, and is too long for this letter.

Canada, which, though common-place, and evidently the expressions of a person imperfectly educated, are true, earnest, and worth your reading:—

“These Scripture usury laws, then, are for no particular race and for no particular time. They lie at the very foundations of national progress and wealth. They form the only great safeguards of labour, and are the security of civil society, and the strength and protection of commerce itself. Let us beware, for our own sakes, how we lay our hand upon the barriers which God has reared around the humble dwelling of the labouring man. . . .

“Business itself is a pleasure, but it is the anxieties and burdens of business arising all out of this debt system, which have caused so many aching pillows and so many broken hearts. What countless multitudes, during the last three hundred years, have gone down to bankruptcy and shame—what fair prospects have been for ever blighted—what happy homes desolated—what peace destroyed—what ruin and destruction have ever marched hand in hand with this system of debt, paper, and usury! Verily its sins have reached unto heaven, and its iniquities are very great.

“What shall the end of these things be? God only knoweth. I fear the system is beyond a cure. All the great interests of humanity are overborne by it, and nothing can flourish as it ought till it is taken out of the way. It contains within itself, as we have at times

witnessed, most potent elements of destruction which in one hour may bring all its riches to nought."

Here, lastly for this month, is another piece of Marmontel for you, describing an ideal landlord's mode of "investing" his money; losing, as it appears, half his income annually by such investment, yet by no means with "aching pillows" or broken hearts for the result. (By the way, for a lesson in writing, observe that I know the Canada author to be imperfectly educated merely by one such phrase as "aching pillow"—for pillows don't ache—and again, by his thinking it religious and impressive to say "knoweth" instead of "knows.") But listen to Marmontel.

"In the neighbourhood of this country-house lived a kind of Philosopher, not an old one, but in the prime of life, who, after having enjoyed everything that he could during six months of the year in town, was in the habit of coming to enjoy six months of his own company in a voluptuous solitude. He presently came to call upon Elise. 'You have the reputation of a wise man, sir,' she said—'tell me, what is your plan of life.' 'My plan, madame? I have never had any,' answered the count. 'I do everything that amuses me. I seek everything that I like, and I avoid with care everything that annoys or displeases me.' 'Do you live alone, or do you see people?' asked Elise. 'I see sometimes our clergyman, whom I lecture on morals. I chat with

labourers, who are better informed than all our servants. I give balls to little village girls, the prettiest in the world. I arrange little lotteries for them, of laces, and ribands.' (Wrong, Mr. Philosopher, as many ribands as you please; but no lotteries.) 'What?' said Elise, with great surprise, 'do those sort of people know what love is?' 'Better than we do, madame—better than we do a hundred times; they love each other like turtle-doves—they make me wish to be married myself!' 'You will confess, however,' said Elise, 'that they love without any delicacy.' 'Nay, madame, delicacy is a refinement of art—they have only the instinct of nature; but, indeed, they have in feeling what we have only in fancy. I have tried, like another, to love, and to be beloved, in the town,—there, caprice and fashion arrange everything, or derange it:—here, there is true liking, and true choice. You will see in the course of the gaieties I give them, how these simple and tender hearts seek each other, without knowing what they are doing.' 'You give me,' replied Elise, 'a picture of the country I little expected; everybody says those sort of people are so much to be pitied.' 'They were so, madame, some years since; but I have found the secret of rendering their condition more happy.' 'Oh! you must tell me your secret?' interrupted Elise, with vivacity. 'I wish also to put it in practice.' 'Nothing can be easier,' replied the count,—this is what I do: I have about two thousand a year of income; I spend five

hundred in Paris, in the two visits that I make there during the year,—five hundred more in my country-house,—and I have a thousand to spare, which I spend on my exchanges.’ ‘And what exchanges do you make?’ ‘Well,’ said the count, ‘I have fields well cultivated, meadows well watered, orchards delicately hedged, and planted with care.’ ‘Well! what then?’ ‘Why, Lucas, Blaise, and Nicholas, my neighbours, and my good friends, have pieces of land neglected or worn out; they have no money to cultivate them. I give them a bit of mine instead, acre for acre; and the same space of land which hardly fed them, enriches them in two harvests: the earth which is ungrateful under their hands, becomes fertile in mine. I choose the seed for it, the way of digging, the manure which suits it best, and as soon as it is in good state, I think of another exchange. Those are my amusements.’ ‘That is charming!’ cried Elise; ‘you know then the art of agriculture?’ ‘I learn a little of it, madame; every day, I oppose the theories of the savants to the experience of the peasants. I try to correct what I find wrong in the reasonings of the one, and in the practice of the other.’ ‘That is an amusing study; but how you ought to be adored then in these cantons! these poor labourers must regard you as their father!’ ‘On each side, we love each other very much, madame.’”

This is all very pretty, but falsely romantic, and not to be read at all with the unqualified respect due to the

natural truth of the passages I before quoted to you from Marmontel. He wrote this partly in the hope of beguiling foolish and selfish persons to the unheard-of amusement of doing some good to their fellow-creatures; but partly also in really erroneous sentiment, his own character having suffered much deterioration by his compliance with the manners of the Court in the period immediately preceding the French Revolution. Many of the false relations between the rich and poor, which could not but end in such catastrophe, are indicated in the above-quoted passage. There is no recognition of duty on either side: the landlord enjoys himself benevolently, and the labourers receive his benefits in placid gratitude, without being either provoked or instructed to help themselves. Their material condition is assumed to be necessarily wretched unless continually relieved; while their household virtue and honour are represented (truly) as purer than those of their masters. The Revolution could not do away with this fatal anomaly; to this day the French peasant is a better man than his lord; and no government will be possible in France until she has learned that all authority, before it can be honoured, must be honourable.

But, putting the romantic method of operation aside, the question remains whether Marmontel is right in his main idea that a landlord should rather take 2,000*l.* in rents, and return 1,000*l.* in help to his tenants, than remit the 1,000*l.* of rents at once. To which I reply,

that it is primarily better for the State, and ultimately for the tenant, that administrative power should be increased in the landlord's hands; but that it ought not to be by rents which he can change at his own pleasure, but by fixed duties under State law. Of which, in due time;—I do not say in my next letter, for that would be mere defiance of the third Fors.

Ever faithfully yours,

JOHN RUSKIN.

LETTER XXII.

MY FRIENDS,

BRANTWOOD,

19th September, 1872.

I AM to-day to begin explaining to you the meaning of my own books, which, some people will tell you, is an egotistical and impertinent thing for an author to do. My own view of the matter is, that it is generally more egotistical and impertinent to explain the meaning of other people's books,—which, nevertheless, at this day in England many young and inexperienced persons are paid for pretending to do. What intents I have had, myself, therefore, in this *Fors Clavigera*, and some other lately published writings, I will take on me to tell you, without more preamble.

And first, for their little vignette stamp of roses on title-page. It is copied from the clearest bit of the pattern of the petticoat of Spring, where it is drawn tight over her thigh, in Sandro Botticelli's picture of her, at Florence. I drew it on the wood myself, and Mr. Burgess cut it; and it is on all my title-pages, because whatever I now write is meant to help in founding the society called of 'Monte Rosa;'—see page eighth of the seventeenth of these letters. Such reference hereafter, observe, is only thus printed, (XVII. 8).

And I copied this vignette from Sandro Botticelli, for

two reasons: first, that no man has ever yet drawn, and none is likely to draw for many a day, roses as well as Sandro has drawn them; secondly, because he was the only painter of Italy who thoroughly felt and understood Dante; and the only one also who understood the thoughts of Heathens and Christians equally, and could in a measure paint both Aphrodite and the Madonna. So that he is on the whole, the most universal of painters; and take him, all in all, the greatest Florentine workman: and I wish you to know with Dante's opinions, his, also, on all subjects of importance to you, of which Florentines could judge.

And of his life, it is proper for you immediately to know thus much: or at least, that so much was current gossip about it in Vasari's time,—that, when he was a boy, he obstinately refused to learn either to read, write, or sum; (and I heartily wish all boys would and could do the same, till they were at least as old as the illiterate Alfred,) whereupon his father, “disturbed by these eccentric habits of his son, turned him over in despair to a gossip of his, called Botticello, who was a goldsmith.”

And on this, note two things: the first, that all the great early Italian masters of painting and sculpture, without exception, began by being goldsmiths' apprentices: the second, that they all felt themselves so indebted to, and formed by the master-craftsman who had mainly disciplined their fingers, whether in work on gold or marble, that they practically considered him their father, and took

his name rather than their own; so that most of the great Italian workmen are now known, not by their own names, but by those of their masters,* the master being himself often entirely forgotten by the public, and eclipsed by his pupil; but immortal *in* his pupil, and named in his name. Thus, our Sandro, Alessandro, or Alexander's own name was Filipepi; which name you never heard of, I suppose, till now: nor I, often, but his master's was Botticello; of which master we nevertheless know only that he so formed, and informed, this boy that thenceforward the boy thought it right to be called "Botticello's Sandro," and nobody else's. Which in Italian is Sandro di Botticello; and that is abbreviated into Sandro Botticelli. So, Francesco Francia is short for Francesco di Francia, or "Francia's Francis," though nobody ever heard, except thus, of his master the goldsmith, Francia. But his own name was Raibolini. So, Philip Brunelleschi is short for Brunellesco's Philip, Brunellesco being his father's *Christian* name, to show how much he owed to his father's careful training; (the family name was Lippo); and, which is the prettiest instance of all, "Piero della Francesca," means 'Francesca's Peter;' because he was chiefly trained by his mother, Francesca. All which I beg you to take to heart, and meditate on, concerning Mastership and Pupilage.

* Or of their native towns or villages,—these being recognized as masters, also.

But to return to Sandro. Having learned prosperously how to manage gold, he takes a fancy to know how to manage colour; and is put by his good father under, as it chanced, the best master in Florence, or the world, at that time; the Monk Lippi, whose work is the finest, out and out, that ever monk did, which I attribute, myself, to what is usually considered faultful in him, his having run away with a pretty novice out of a convent. I am not jesting, I assure you, in the least; but how can I possibly help the nature of things, when *that* chances to be laughable? Nay, if you think of it, perhaps you will not find it so laughable that Lippi should be the only monk (if this be a fact), who ever did good painter's work.

Be that as it may, Lippi and his pupil were happy in each other; and the boy soon became a smiter of colour, or colour-smith, no less than a gold-smith; and eventually an "Alexander the Coppersmith," also, not inimical to St. Paul, and for whom Christian people may wish, not revengefully, "the Lord reward him according to his works," though he was fain, Demetrius-like, sometimes to shrine Diana. And he painted, for a beginning, a figure of Fortitude; (having, therefore, just right to give us our vignette to Fors), and then, one of St. Jerome, and then, one of our Lady, and then, one of Pallas, and then, one of Venus with the Graces and Zephyrs, and especially the Spring aforesaid with flowery petticoats; and, finally, the Assumption of our Lady, with the Patriarchs, the Prophets, the Apostles, the Evangelists, the Martyrs, the

Confessors, the Doctors, the Virgins, and the Hierarchies. It is to be presumed that by this time he had learned to read, though we hear nothing of it, (rather the contrary, for he is taunted late in life with rude scholarship,) and was so good a divine, as well as painter, that Pope Sixtus IV. sent for him to be master of the works in his new chapel (the same you have sometimes heard of as the "Sixtine" or "Sistine"); wherein he painted Moses, and his wife (see XX. 19, note), very beautifully; and the Destruction of Korah, and the Temptation of Christ,—all well preserved and wonderful pieces, which no person now ever thinks of looking at, though they are probably the best works of pictorial divinity extant in Europe. And having thus obtained great honour and reputation, and considerable sums of money, he squandered all the last away; and then, returning to Florence, set himself to comment upon and illustrate Dante, engraving some plates for that purpose which I will try to give you a notion of, some day. And at this time, Savonarola beginning to make himself heard, and founding in Florence the company of the Piagnoni, (Mourners, or Grumblers, as opposed to the men of pleasure), Sandro made a Grumbler of himself, being then some forty years old; and,—his new master being burned in the great square of Florence, a year afterwards (1498),—became a Grumbler to purpose; and doing what he could to show "che cosa è la fede," namely in engraving Savonarola's "Triumph of Faith," fell sadder, wiser, and poorer, day

by day; until he became a poor bedesman of Lorenzo de' Medici; and having gone some time on crutches, being unable to stand upright, and received his due share of what I hope we may call discriminate charity, died peacefully in his fifty-eighth year, having lived a glorious life; and was buried at Florence, in the Church of All Saints, three hundred and fifty-seven years ago.

So much for my vignette. For my title, see II. 4, and XIII. 5. I mean it, as you will see by the latter passage, to be read, in English, as "Fortune the Nailbearer," and that the book itself should show you how to form, or make, this Fortune, see the fifth sentence down the page, in II. 4; and compare III. 4, 5.

And in the course of the first year's letters, I tried gradually to illustrate to you certain general propositions, which, if I had set them down in form at once, might have seemed to you too startling, or disputable, to be discussed with patience. So I tried to lead into some discussion of them first, and now hope that you may endure the clearer statement of them, as follows:—

PROPOSITION I. (I. 3, 4).—The English nation is beginning another group of ten years, empty in purse, empty in stomach, and in a state of terrified hostility to every other nation under the sun.

I assert this very firmly and seriously. But in the course of these papers every important assertion on the opposite side shall be fairly inserted; so that you may consider of them at your leisure. Here is one, for instance,

from the *Morning Post* of Saturday, August 31, of this year :—"The country is at the present moment in a state of such unexampled prosperity that it is actually suffering from the very superabundance of its riches. . . . Coals and meat are at famine prices, we are threatened with a strike among the bakers, and there is hardly a single department of industry in which the cost of production has not been enhanced."

This is exceedingly true; the *Morning Post* ought to have congratulated you further on the fact that the things produced by this greater cost are now usually good for nothing: Hear on this head, what Mr. Emerson said of us, even so far back as 1856 (and we have made much inferior articles since then). "England is aghast at the disclosure of her fraud in the adulteration of food, of drugs, and of almost every fabric in her mills and shops; finding that milk will not nourish, nor sugar sweeten, nor bread satisfy, nor pepper bite the tongue, nor glue stick. In true England all is false and forged. . . . It is rare to find a merchant who knows why a crisis occurs in trade,—why prices rise or fall, or who knows the mischief of paper money.* In the culmination of National Prosperity, in the annexation of countries; building of ships, dépôts, towns; in the influx of tons of gold and silver; amid the chuckle of chancellors and financiers, it was found that bread rose to famine prices, that the yeoman

* Or the use of it, Mr. Emerson should have added.

was forced to sell his cow and pig, his tools, and his acre of land ; and the dreadful barometer of the poor-rates was touching the point of ruin." *

PROPOSITION II. (I. 5).—Of such prosperity I, for one, have seen enough, and will endure it no longer quietly ; but will set aside some part of my income to help, if anybody else will join me, in forming a National store instead of a National Debt ; and will explain to you as I have time and power, how to avoid such distress in future, by adhering to the elementary principles of Human Economy, which have been of late wilfully entombed under pyramids of falsehood.

"Wilfully ;" note this grave word in my second proposition ; and invest a shilling in the purchase of *Bishop Berkeley on Money*, being extracts from his *Querist*, by James Harvey, Liverpool.† At the bottom of the twenty-first page you will find this query, "Whether the continuous efforts on the part of the *Times*, the *Telegraph*, ‡ the *Economist*, the *Daily News*, and the daily newspaper press, and also of monied men generally, to confound money and capital, be the result of ignorance or design."

Of ignorance in great part, doubtless, for "monied men, generally," are ignorant enough to believe and assert anything ; but it is noticeable that their ignorance

* *English Traits*, (ROUTLEDGE, 1856), p. 95.

† PROVOST, Henrietta Street, Covent Garden.

‡ The *Telegraph* has always seemed to me to play fairer than the rest. The words "daily newspaper press" are, of course, too general.

always tells on their own side;* and the *Times* and *Economist* are now nothing more than passive instruments in their hands. But neither they, nor their organs, would long be able to assert untruths in Political Economy, if the nominal professors of the science would do their duty in investigation of it. Of whom I now choose, for direct personal challenge, the Professor at Cambridge; and, being a Doctor of Laws of his own University, and a Fellow of two colleges in mine, I charge him with having insufficiently investigated the principles of the science he is appointed to teach. I charge him with having advanced in defence of the theory of Interest on Money, four arguments, every one of them false, and false with such fallacy as a child ought to have been able to detect. I have exposed one of these fallacies at page 19 of the first letter, and the three others at page 17 to 20 of the eighteenth letter, in this book, and I now publicly call on Professor Fawcett either to defend, or retract, the statements so impugned. And this open challenge cannot be ignored by Professor Fawcett, on the plea that Political Economy is his province, and not mine. If any man holding definite position as a scholar in either University, challenged me publicly and gravely with having falsely defined an elementary principle of Art, I should hold myself bound to answer him, and I think public opinion would ratify my decision.

* Compare *Munera Pulveris*, § 140.

PROPOSITION III. (I. 6).—Your redemption from the distress into which you have fallen is in your own hands, and in nowise depends on forms of government or modes of election.

But you must make the most of what forms of government you have got, by choosing honest men to work them (if you choose at all), and preparatorily, by honestly obeying them, and in all possible ways, making honest men of yourselves; and if it be indeed, now impossible—as I heard the clergyman declare at Matlock, (IX. 18) for any honest man to live by trade in England,—amending the methods of English trade in the necessary particulars, until it becomes possible for honest men to live by it again. In the meantime resolving that you, for your part, will do good work, whether you live by it or die—(II. 23).

PROPOSITION IV. (I. 10—13).—Of present parliaments and governments you have mainly to inquire what they want with your money when they demand it. And that you may do this intelligently, you are to remember that only a certain quantity of money exists at any given time, and that your first business must be to ascertain the available amount of it, and what it is available for. Because you do not put more money into rich people's hands, when you succeed in putting into rich people's heads that they want something to-day which they had no occasion for yesterday. What they pay you for one thing, they cannot for another; and if they now spend their incomes, they

can spend no more. Which you will find they do, and always have done, and can, in fact, neither spend more, nor less—this income being indeed the quantity of food their land produces, by which all art and all manufacture must be supported, and of which no art or manufacture, except such as are directly and wisely employed on the land, can produce a morsel.

PROPOSITION V. (II. 6).—You had better take care of your squires. Their land, indeed, only belongs to them, or is said to belong, because they seized it long since by force of hand, (compare the quotation from Professor Fawcett at p. xix. of the preface to *Munera Pulveris*), and you may think you have precisely the same right to seize it now, for yourselves, if you can. So you have,—precisely the same right,—that is to say, none. As they had no right to seize it then, neither have you now. The land, by divine right, can be neither theirs nor yours, except under conditions which you will not ascertain by fighting. In the meantime, by the law of England, the land is theirs; and your first duty as Englishmen is to obey the law of England, be it just or unjust, until it is by due and peaceful deliberation altered, if alteration of it be needful; and to be sure that you are able and willing to obey good laws, before you seek to alter unjust ones, (II. 23). For you cannot know whether they are unjust or not until you are just yourselves. Also, your race of Squires, considered merely as an animal one, is very precious; and you had better see what use you can make of

it, before you let it fall extinct, like the Dodo's. For none other such exists in any part of this round little world; and, once destroyed, it will be long before it develops itself again from Mr. Darwin's germ-cells.

PROPOSITION VI. (V. 23).—But, if you can, honestly, you had better become minute squires yourselves. The law of England nowise forbids your buying any land which the squires are willing to part with, for such savings as you may have ready. And the main proposal made to you in this book is that you should so economize till you can indeed become diminutive squires, and develop accordingly into some proportionate fineness of race.

PROPOSITION VII. (II. 7).—But it is perhaps not equally necessary to take care of your capitalists, or so-called 'Employers.' For your real employer is the public; and the so-called employer is only a mediator between the public and you, whose mediation is perhaps more costly than need be, to you both. So that it will be well for you to consider how far, without such intervention, you may succeed in employing *yourselves*; and my seventh proposition is accordingly that some of you, and all, in some proportion, should be diminutive capitalists, as well as diminutive squires, yet under a novel condition; as follows:—

PROPOSITION VIII.—Observe, first, that in the ancient and hitherto existent condition of things, the squire is essentially an idle person who has possession of land, and lends it, but does not use it; and the capitalist is essen-

tially an idle person, who has possession of tools, and lends them, but does not use them : while the labourer, by definition, is a laborious person, and by presumption a penniless one, who is obliged to borrow both land and tools, and paying, for rent on the one, and profit on the other, what will maintain the squire and capitalist, digs finally a remnant of roots, wherewith to maintain himself.

These may, in so brief form, sound to you very radical and international definitions. I am glad therefore, that (though entirely accurate) they are not mine, but Professor Fawcett's. You will find them quoted from his *Manual of Political Economy* at the eleventh page of my eleventh letter. He does not, indeed, in the passage there quoted, define the capitalist as the possessor of tools, but he does so quite clearly at the end of the fable quoted in I. 18,—“The plane is the symbol of all capital,” and the paragraph given in XI. 11, is, indeed, a most faithful statement of the present condition of things, which is, practically, that rich people are paid for being rich, and idle people are paid for being idle, and busy people taxed for being busy. Which does not appear to me a state of matters much longer tenable ; but rather, and this is my 8th Proposition (XI. 15) that land should belong to those who can use *it*, and tools to those who can use *them* ; or, as a less revolutionary, and instantly practicable, proposal, that those who have land and tools—should use them.

PROPOSITION IX. and last:—To know the “use” either of land or tools, you must know what useful things

can be grown from the one, and made with the other. And therefore to know what is useful, and what useless, and be skilful to provide the one, and wise to scorn the other, is the first need for all industrious men. Wherefore, I propose that schools should be established, wherein the use of land and tools shall be taught conclusively:—in other words, the sciences of agriculture (with associated river and sea-culture); and the noble arts and exercises of humanity.

Now you cannot but see how impossible it would have been for me, in beginning these letters, to have started with a formal announcement of these their proposed contents, even now startling enough, probably, to some of my readers, after nearly two years' preparatory talk. You must see also how in speaking of so wide a subject, it is not possible to complete the conversation respecting each part of it at once, and set that aside; but it is necessary to touch on each head by little and little. Yet in the course of desultory talk, I have been endeavouring to exhibit to you, essentially, these six following things, namely,—A, the general character and use of squires; B, the general character and mischievousness of capitalists; C, the nature of money; D, the nature of useful things; E, the methods of finance which obtain money; and F, the methods of work which obtain useful things.

To these "six points" I have indeed directed my own thoughts, and endeavoured to direct yours, perseveringly, throughout these letters, though to each point as the

Third Fors might dictate ; that is to say, as light was thrown upon it in my mind by what might be publicly taking place at the time, or by any incident happening to me personally. Only it chanced that in the course of the first year, 1871, one thing which publicly took place, namely the siege and burning of Paris, was of interest so unexpected that it necessarily broke up what little consistency of plan I had formed, besides putting me into a humour in which I could only write incoherently ; deep domestic vexation occurring to me at the same time, till I fell ill, and my letters and vexations had like to have ended together. So I must now patch the torn web as best I can, by giving you reference to what bears on each of the above six heads in the detached talk of these twenty months, (and I hope also a serviceable index at the two years' end) ; and, if the work goes on,—But I had better keep all Ifs out of it.

Meantime, with respect to point A, the general character and use of squires, you will find the meaning of the word 'squire' given in II. 6, as being threefold, like that of Fors. First, it means a rider ; or in more full and perfect sense, a master or governor of beasts ; signifying that a squire has fine sympathy with all beasts of the field, and understanding of their natures complete enough to enable him to govern them for their good, and be king over all creatures, subduing the noxious ones, and cherishing the virtuous ones. Which is the primal meaning of chivalry, the horse, as the noblest, because trainablest, of

wild creatures, being taken for a type of them all. Read on this point, IX. 13—15, and if you can see my larger books, at your library, § 205 of *Aratra Pentelici*; and the last lecture in *Eagle's Nest*.* And observe farther that it follows from what is noted in those places, that to be a good squire, one must have the instincts of animals as well as those of men; but that the typical squire is apt to err somewhat on the lower side, and occasionally to have the instincts of animals *instead* of those of men.

Secondly. The word 'Squire' means a Shield-bearer;—properly, the bearer of some superior person's shield; but at all events, the declarer, by legend, of good deserving and good intention, either others', or his own; with accompanying statement of his resolution to defend and maintain the same; and that so persistently that, rather than lose his shield, he is to make it his death-bed: and so honourably and without thought of vulgar gain, that it is the last blame of base governments to become "shield-sellers;" (compare *Munera Pulveris*, § 127.) On this part of the Squire's character I have not yet been able to insist at any length; but you will find partial suggestion of the manner in which you may thus become yourselves shield-bearers, in *Time and Tide*, §§ 72, 73, and I shall soon have the elementary copies in my Oxford schools published, and you may then learn, if you will, somewhat of shield-drawing and painting.

* Compare also Mr. Maurice's sermon for the fourth Sunday after Trinity in Vol. II. of third series. (SMITH ELDER & Co., no date.)

And thirdly, the word 'Squire' means a Carver, properly a carver at some one else's feast; and typically, has reference to the Squire's duty as a Carver at *all* men's feasts, being Lord of Land, and therefore giver of Food; in which function his lady, as you have heard now often enough, (first from Carlyle), is properly styled Loaf-giver: her duty being, however, first of all to find out where all loaves come from; for, quite retaining his character in the other two respects, the typical squire is apt to fail in this, and to become rather a loaf-eater, or consumer, than giver, (compare X. 6, and X. 18); though even in that capacity the enlightened press of your day thinks you cannot do without him. (VII. 19.) Therefore, for analysis of what he has been, and may be, I have already specified to you certain squires, whose history I wish you to know and think over; (with many others in due course; but, for the present, those already specified are enough,) namely, the Thesens of the Elgin Marbles and Midsummer Night's Dream, (II. 5); the best, and unfortunatest* of the Kings of France, 'St. Louis' (III. 10); the best and unfortunatest of the Kings of England, Henry II. (III. 11); the Lion-heart of England (III. 13); Edward III. of England and his lion's whelp, (IV. 16); again and again the two Second Friedrichs, of Germany and Prussia; Sir

* In calling a man pre-eminently unfortunate, I do not mean that, as compared with others, he is absolutely less prosperous; but that he is one who has met with the least help or the greatest hostility, from the Third Fors, *in proportion* to the wisdom of his purposes, and virtue of his character.

John Hawkwood, (I. 8, and XV. 13); Sir Thomas More, (VII. 6); Sir Francis Drake, (XIII. 13); and Sir Richard Grenville, (IX. 13). Now all these squires are alike in their high quality of captainship over man and beast; they were pre-eminently the best men of their surrounding groups of men; and the guides of their people, faithfully recognized for such; unless when their people got drunk, (which sometimes happened, with sorrowful issue,) and all equality with them seen to be divinely impossible. (Compare XIV. 9). And that most of them lived by thieving does not, under the conditions of their day, in any wise detract from their virtue, or impair their delightfulness, (any more than it does that of your, on the whole I suppose, favourite, Englishman, and nomadic Squire of Suerwood, Robin Hode or Hood); the theft, or piracy, as it might happen, being always effected with a good conscience, and in an open, honourable and merciful manner. Thus, in the account of Sir Francis's third voyage, which was faithfully taken out of the reports of Mr. Christofer Ceely, Ellis Hixon, and others who were in the same voyage with him, by Philip Nichols, preacher, revised and annotated by Sir Francis himself, and set forth by his nephew, what I told you about his proceedings on the coast of Spanish America (XIII. 14) is thus summed,—

“There were at this time belonging to Carthagene, Nombre de Dios, Rio Grand, Santa Martha, Rio de Hacha,

Venta Cruz, Veragua, Nicaragua, the Honduras, Jamaica, &c., about two hundred fregates,* some of a hundred and twenty tunnes, other but of tenne or twelve tunne, but the most of thirty or forty tunne, which all had intercourse betweene Carthagene and Nombre de Dios, the most of which, during our abode in those parts, wee tooke, and some of them twice or thrice each, yet never burnt nor suncke any, unless they were made out men-of-warre against us. . . . Many strange birds, beastes, and fishes, besides, fruits, trees, plants and the like were seene and observed of us in this journey, which, willingly, wee pretermit, as hastening to the end of our voyage, which from this Cape of St. Anthony wee intended to finish by sayling the directest and speediest way homeward, and accordingly even beyonde our owne expectation most happily performed. For whereas our captaine had purposed to touch at New-found-land, and there to have watered, which would have been some let unto us, though wee stood in great want of water, yet God Almighty so provided for us, by giving us good store of raine water, that we were sufficiently furnished; and within twenty-three dayes wee past from the Cape of Florida to the Iles of Silley, and so arrived at Plimouth on Sunday, about sermon-time, August the Ninth, 1573, at what time the newes of our captaine's returne brought unto his"

* Italian "fregata," I believe "polished-sided" ship for swiftness, "fricata;" but the derivation is uncertain.

(people?) “did so speedily pass over all the church, and surpass their mindes with desire and delight to see him, that very fewe or none remained with the preacher, all hastening to see the evidence of God’s love and blessing towards our gracious Queene and countrey, by the fruite of our captaines labour and successe. Soli Deo gloria.”

I am curious to know, and hope to find, that the deserted preacher was Mr. Philip Nichols, the compiler afterwards of this log-book of Sir Francis.

Putting out of the question, then, this mode of their livelihood, you will find all these squires essentially “captaines,” head, or chief persons, occupied in maintaining good order, and putting things to rights, so that they naturally become chief Lawyers without Wigs, (otherwise called Kings), in the districts accessible to them. Of whom I have named first, the Athenian Theseus, “setter to rights,” or “settler,” his name means; he being both the founder of the first city whose history you are to know, and the first true Ruler of beasts: for his mystic contest with the Minotaur is the fable through which the Greeks taught what they knew of the more terrible and mysterious relations between the lower creatures and man; and the desertion of him by Ariadne, (for indeed he never deserted her, but she him,—involuntarily, poor sweet maid,—Death calling her in Diana’s name,) is the conclusive stroke against him by the Third Fors.

Of this great squire, then, you shall really have some account in next letter. I have only further time now to

tell you that this month's frontispiece is a facsimile of two separate parts of an engraving originally executed by Sandro Botticelli. An impression of Sandro's own plate is said to exist in the Vatican; I have never seen one. The ordinarily extant impressions are assuredly from an inferior plate, a copy of Botticelli's. But his manner of engraving has been imitated by the copyist as far as he understood it, and the important qualities of the design are so entirely preserved that the work has often been assigned to the master himself.

It represents the seven works of Mercy, as completed by an eighth work in the centre of all; namely, lending without interest, from the Mount of Pity accumulated by generous alms. In the upper part of the design are seen the shores of Italy, with the cities which first built Mounts of Pity: Venice, chief of all;—then Florence, Genoa, and Castruccio's Lucca; in the distance prays the monk of Ancona, who first thought—inspired of heaven—of such war with usurers; and an angel crowns him, as you see. The little dashes, which form the dark background, represent waves of the Adriatic; and they, as well as all the rest, are rightly and manfully engraved, though you may not think it; but I have no time to-day to give you a lecture on engraving, nor to tell you the story of Mounts of Pity, which is too pretty to be spoiled by haste; but I hope to get something of Theseus and Frederick the Second, preparatorily, into next letter. Meantime I must close this one by answering two requests, which, though

made to me privately, I think it right to state my reasons for refusing, publicly.

The first was indeed rather the offer of an honour to me, than a request, in the proposal that I should contribute to the Maurice Memorial Fund.

I loved Mr. Maurice, learned much from him, worked under his guidance and authority, and have deep regard and respect for some persons whose names I see on the Memorial Committee.

But I must decline joining them: first, because I dislike all memorials, as such; thinking that no man who deserves them, needs them; and secondly, because, though I affectionately remember and honour Mr. Maurice, I have no mind to put his bust in Westminster Abbey. For I do not think of him as one of the great, or even one of the leading, men of the England of his day; but only as the centre of a group of students whom his amiable sentimentalism at once exalted and stimulated, while it relieved them from any painful necessities of exact scholarship in divinity. And as he was always honest, (at least in intention), and unfailingly earnest and kind, he was harmless and soothing in error, and vividly helpful when unerring. I have above referred you, and most thankfully, to his sermon on the relations of man to inferior creatures; and I can quite understand how pleasant it was for a disciple panic-struck by the literal aspect of the doctrine of justification by faith, to be told, in an earlier discourse, that "We speak of an anticipation as justified by the event.

Supposing that anticipation to be something so inward, so essential to me, that my own very existence is involved in it, *I* am justified by it." But consolatory equivocations of this kind have no enduring place in literature; nor has Mr. Maurice more real right to a niche in Westminster Abbey than any other tender-hearted Christian gentleman, who has successfully, for a time, promoted the charities of his faith, and parried its discussion.

I have been also asked to contribute to the purchase of the Alexandra Park; and I will not: and beg you, my working readers, to understand, once for all, that I wish your *homes* to be comfortable, and refined; and that I will resist, to the utmost of my power, all schemes founded on the vile modern notion that you are to be crowded in kennels till you are nearly dead, that other people may make money by your work, and then taken out in squads by tramway and railway, to be revived and refined by science and art. Your first business is to make your homes healthy and delightful: then, keep your wives and children there, and let your return to *them* be your daily "holy day."

Ever faithfully yours,

JOHN RUSKIN.

LETTER XXIII.

BRANTWOOD,

MY FRIENDS,

October 24th, 1872.

AT breakfast this morning, which I was eating sulkily, because I had final press-corrections to do on *Fors* (and the last are always worst to do, being without repentance,) I took up the *Pall Mall Gazette* for the 21st, and chanced on two things, of which one much interested, the other much pleased me, and both are to our present purpose.

What interested me was the statement in the column of "This Evening's News," made by a gentleman much acquainted with naval business, that "Mr. Goschen is the one man to whom, and to whom alone, we can as a nation look even for permission to retain our power at sea."

Whether entirely, or, as I apprehend, but partially, true, this statement is a remarkable one to appear in the journals of a nation which has occupied its mind lately chiefly on the subject of its liberties; and I cannot but wonder what Sir Francis Drake would have thought of such a piece of Evening's News, communicated in form to *him*!

What he would have thought—if you can fancy it—would be very proper for you also to think, and much to our eventual purpose. But the part of the contents of

the *Pall Mall* which I found to bear on the subject of this letter, was the address by a mangled convict to a benevolent gentleman. The Third Fors must assuredly have determined that this letter should be pleasing to the Touchstone mind,—the gods will have it poetical; it ends already with rhyme, and must begin in like manner, for these first twelve verses of the address are much too precious to be lost among “news,” whether of morning or evening.

“Mr. P. Taylor, honnered Sir,
Accept these verses I indict,
Thanks to a gentle mother dear
Whitch taught these infant hands to rite.

“And thanks unto the Chaplin here,
A heminent relidjous man,
As kind a one as ever dipt
A beke into the flowing can.

“He points out to me most clear
How sad and sinfull is my ways,
And numerous is the briney tear
Whitch for that man I nigty prays.

“‘Cohen,’ he ses, in sech a voice !
‘Your lot is hard, your stripes is sore ;
But Cohen,’ he ses, ‘rejoice ! rejoice !
And never never steale no more !’

“His langwidge is so kind and good,
It works so strong on me inside,
I would not do it if I could,
I could not do it if I tryed.

“Ah, wence this moisteur im my eye
Whot makes me turn agin my food ?

O, Mister Taylor, arak not why,
Ime so cut up with gratitood.

“Fansy a gentleman like you,
No paultry Beak, but a M.P.,
A riggling in your heasy chair
The riggles they put onto me.

“I see thee shudderin ore thy wine,—
You hardly know what you are at,
Whenere you think of Us emplyin
The bloody and unhenglish Cat.

“Well may your indigernation rise!
I call it Manley what you feeled
At seein Briton’s n-k-d b-cks
By brutial jailors acked and weald.

“Habolish these yere torchiers!
Dont have no horgies any more
Of arf a dozen orficers
All wallerin in a fellers goar.

“Inprisonment alone is not
A thing of whitch we woud complane;
Add ill-convenience to our lot,
But do not give the convick pain.

“And well you know that’s not the wust,
Not if you went and biled us whole;
The Lash’s degeradation!—that’s
What cuts us to the wery soul!”

The questions respecting punishment and reformation, which these verses incidentally propose, are precisely the same which had to be determined three thousand years ago in the city of Athens—(the only difference of any importance being that the instrument of execution discussed was club instead of cat); and their determination gave rise to the peculiar form in which the

history of the great Athenian Squire, Theseus,—our to-day's subject—was presented to mankind.

The story is a difficult one to tell, and a more difficult one still to understand. The likeness, or imagined likeness, of the hero himself, as the Greeks fancied him, you may see, when you care to do so, at the British Museum, in simple guise enough.

Miss Edgeworth, in her noble last novel, *Helen*, makes *her* hero fly into a passion at even being suspected of wishing to quote the too trite proverb that "No man is a hero to his valet-de-chambre." But Mr. Beaucherk disclaims it for its triteness only, when he ought rather to have disclaimed it for its untruth. Every truly great man that ever I heard of, was a principal hero to his servants, and most heroic to those most intimate with him. At all events, the Greeks meant all the world to be to their hero as valets-de-chambre, for he sits mother-naked. Under which primitive aspect, indeed, I would fain show you, mentally as well as bodily, every hero I give you account of. It is the modern method, in order to give you more inviting pictures of people, to dress them—often very correctly, in the costume of the time, with such old clothes as the masquerade shops keep. But my own steady aim is to strip them for you, that you may see if they are flesh, indeed, or dust. Similarly, I shall try to strip theories bare, and facts, such as you need to know.

Mother-naked sits Theseus: and round about him, not much more veiled, ride his Athenians, in Pan-Athenaic procession, honouring their Queen-Goddess. Admired, beyond all other marble shapes in the world; for which reason, the gentlemen of my literary club here in London, professing devotion to the same goddess, decorate their very comfortable corner house in Pall Mall with a copy of this Attic sculpture.

Being therein, themselves, Attic in no wise, but essentially barbarous, pilfering what they cannot imitate: for a truly Attic mind would have induced them to pourtray *themselves*, as they appear in their own Pan-Christian procession, whenever and wherever it may be:—presumably, to Epsom downs on the Derby day.

You may see, I said, the statue of Theseus whenever you care to do so. I do not in the least know why you *should* care. But for years back, you, or your foolish friends, have been making a mighty fuss to get yourselves into the British Museum on Sundays: so I suppose you want to see the Theseus, or the stuffed birds, or the crabs and spiders, or the skeleton of the gorilla, or the parched alligator-skins; and you imagine these contemplations likely to improve, and sanctify, that is to say, recreate, your minds.

But are you quite sure you have got any minds yet to be recreated? Before you expect edification from that long gallery full of long-legged inconceivable spiders, and colossal blotchy crabs, did you ever think

of looking with any mind, or mindfulness, at the only too easily conceivable short-legged spider of your own English acquaintance? or did you ever so much as consider why the crabs on Margate sands were minded to go sideways instead of straightforward? Have you so much as watched a spider making his cobweb, or, if you have not yet had leisure to do that, in the toil of your own cobweb-making, did you ever *think* how he threw his first thread across the corner?

No need for you to go to the British Museum yet, my friends, either on Sundays or any other day.

“Well, but the Greek sculpture? We can’t see *that* at home in our room corners.”

And what is Greek sculpture, or any sculpture, to you? Are your own legs and arms not handsome enough for you to look at, but you must go and stare at chipped and smashed bits of stone in the likenesses of legs and arms that ended their walks and work two thousand years ago?

“Your own legs and arms are not as handsome as—you suppose they ought to be,” say you?

No; I fancy not: and you will not make them handsomer by sauntering with your hands in your pockets through the British Museum. I suppose you will have an agitation, next, for leave to smoke in it. Go and walk in the fields on Sunday, making sure, first, therefore, that you have fields to walk in: look at living birds, not at stuffed ones; and make your own breasts

and shoulders better worth seeing than the Elgin Marbles.

Which to effect, remember, there are several matters to be thought of. The shoulders will get strong by exercise. So indeed will the breast. But the breast chiefly needs exercise *inside* of it—of the lungs, namely, and of the heart; and this last exercise is very curiously inconsistent with many of the athletic exercises of the present day. And the reason I do want you, for once, to go to the British Museum, and to look at that broad chest of Theseus, is that the Greeks imagined it to have something better than a Lion's Heart beneath its breadth—a Hero's heart, duly trained in every pulse.

They imagined it so. Your modern extremely wise and liberal historians will tell you it never was so:—that no real Theseus ever existed then; and that none can exist now, or, rather, that everybody is himself a Theseus and a little more.

All the more strange then, all the more instructive, as the disembodied Cincinnatus of the Roman, so this disembodied Theseus of the Ionian; though certainly Mr. Stuart Mill could not consider him, even in that ponderous block of marble imagery, a "utility fixed and embodied in a material object." Not even a disembodied utility—not even a ghost—if he never lived. An idea only; yet one that has ruled all minds of men to this hour, from the hour of its first being born, a dream, into this practical and solid world.

Ruled, and still rules, in a thousand ways, which you know no more than the paths by which the winds have come that blow in your face. But you never pass a day without being brought, somehow, under the power of Theseus.

You cannot pass a china-shop, for instance, nor an upholsterer's, without seeing, on some mug or plate, or curtain, or chair, the pattern known as the "Greek fret," simple or complex. I once held it in especial dislike, as the chief means by which bad architects tried to make their buildings look classical; and as ugly in itself. Which it is: and it has an ugly meaning also; but a deep one, which I did not then know; having been obliged to write too young, when I knew only half truths, and was eager to set them forth by what I thought fine words. People used to call me a good writer then; now they say I can't write at all; because, for instance, if I think anybody's house is on fire, I only say, "Sir, your house is on fire;" whereas formerly I used to say, "Sir, the abode in which you probably passed the delightful days of youth is in a state of inflammation," and everybody used to like the effect of the two p's in "probably passed," and of the two d's in "delightful days."

Well, that Greek fret, ugly in itself, has yet definite and noble service in decorative work, as black has among colours; much more, has it a significance, very precious, though very solemn, when you can read it.

There is so much in it, indeed, that I don't well know where to begin. Perhaps it will be best to go back to our cathedral door at Lucca, where we have been already. For as, after examining the sculpture on the bell, with the help of the sympathetic ringer, I was going in to look at the golden lamp, my eyes fell on a slightly traced piece of sculpture and legend on the southern wall of the porch, which, partly feeling it out with my finger, it being worn away by the friction of many passing shoulders, broad and narrow, these six hundred years and more, I drew for you, and Mr. Burgess has engraved.

The straggling letters at the side, read straight, and with separating of the words, run thus:—

HIC QVEM CRETICVS EDIT DEDALVS EST LABERINTHVS
DE QVO NVLLVS VADERE QVIVIT QVI FVIT INTVS
NI THESEVS GRATIS ADRIANE STAMINE JVTVS.

which is in English:—

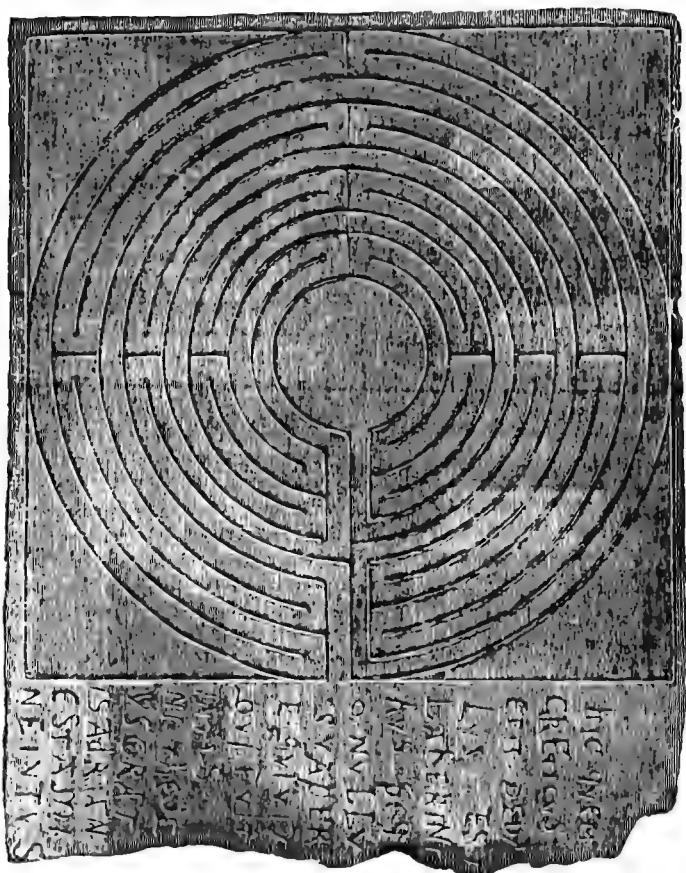
This is the labyrinth which the Cretan Dedalus built.

Out of which nobody could get who was inside,

Except Theseus; nor could he have done it, unless he had been helped with a thread by Adriane, all for love.

Upon which you are to note, first, that the grave announcement, "This is the labyrinth which the Cretan Dedalus built," may possibly be made interesting even to some of your children, if reduced from mediæval sublimity, into your more popular legend—"This is the

house that Jack built." The cow with the crumpled horn will then remind them of the creature who, in the



midst of this labyrinth, lived as a spider in the centre of his web; and the "maiden all forlorn" may stand for

Ariadne, or Adriane — (either name is given her by Chaucer, as he chooses to have three syllables or two) — while the gradual involution of the ballad, and necessity of clear-mindedness as well as clear utterance on the part of its singer, is a pretty vocal imitation of the deepening labyrinth. Theseus, being a pious hero, and the first Athenian knight who cut his hair short in front, may not inaptly be represented by the priest all shaven and shorn; the cock that crew in the morn is the proper Athenian symbol of a pugnacious mind; and the malt that lay in the house fortunately indicates the connection of Theseus and the Athenian power with the mysteries of Eleusis, where corn first, it is said, grew in Greece. And by the way, I am more and more struck every day, by the singular Grecism in Shakspeare's mind, contrary in many respects to the rest of his nature; yet compelling him to associate English fairyland with the great Duke of Athens, and to use the most familiar of all English words for land, "acre," in the Greek or Eleusinian sense, not the English one!

"Between the acres of the rye,
These pretty country-folks do lie—"

and again—"search every acre in the high grown field," meaning "ridge," or "crest," not "ager," the root of "agriculture." Lastly, in our nursery rhyme, observe that the name of Jack, the builder, stands excellently for Dædalus, retaining the idea of him down to the

phrase, "Jack-of-all-Trades." Of this Greek builder you will find some account at the end of my *Aratra Pentelici*: to-day I can only tell you he is distinctively the power of finest human, as opposed to Divine, workmanship or craftsmanship. Whatever good there is, and whatever evil, in the labour of the hands, separated from that of the soul, is exemplified by his history and performance. In the deepest sense, he was to the Greeks, Jack of all trades, yet Master of none; the real Master of every trade being always a God. His own special work or craft was inlaying or dovetailing, and especially of black in white.

And this house which he built was his finest piece of involution, or cunning workmanship; and the memory of it is kept by the Greeks for ever afterwards, in that running border of theirs, involved in and repeating



itself, called the Greek fret, of which you will at once recognise the character in these two pictures of the labyrinth of Dædalus itself, on the coins of the place where it was built, Cnossus, in the island of Crete; and which you see, in the frontispiece, surrounding the head of Theseus, himself, on a coin of the same city.

Of course frets and returning lines were used in ornamentation when there were no labyrinths—probably long before labyrinths. A symbol is scarcely ever invented just when it is needed. Some already recognised and accepted form or thing becomes symbolic at a particular time. Horses had tails, and the moon quarters, long before there were Turks; but the horse-tail and crescent are not less definitely symbolic to the Ottoman. So, the early forms of ornament are nearly alike, among all nations of any capacity for design: they put meaning into them afterwards, if they ever come themselves to *have* any meaning. Vibrate but the point of a tool against an unbaked vase, as it revolves, set on the wheel,—you have a wavy or zigzag line. The vase revolves once; the ends of the wavy line do not exactly tally when they meet; you get over the blunder by turning one into a head, the other into a tail,—and have a symbol of eternity—if, first, which is wholly needful, you have an *idea* of eternity!

Again, the free sweep of a pen at the finish of a large letter has a tendency to throw itself into a spiral. There is no particular intelligence, or spiritual emotion, in the production of this line. A worm draws it with his coil, a fern with its bud, and a periwinkle with his shell. Yet, completed in the Ionic capital, and arrested in the bending point of the acanthus leaf in the Corinthian one, it has become the primal element of beautiful architecture and ornament in all the ages; and is eloquent with endless symbolism, representing the power of the

winds and waves in Athenian work, and of the old serpent, which is the Devil and Satan, in Gothic work: or, indeed, often enough, of both, the Devil being held prince of the power of the air—as in the story of Job, and the lovely story of Buonconte of Montefeltro, in Dante: nay, in this very tale of Theseus, as Chaucer tells it,—having got hold, by ill luck, only of the later and calumnious notion that Theseus deserted his saviour-mistress, he wishes him Devil-speed instead of God-speed, and that, energetically—

‘A twenty-dival way the wind him drive.’’

For which, indeed, Chaucer somewhat deserved, (for he ought not to have believed such things of Theseus,) the God of Love’s anger at his drawing too near the daisy. I will write the pretty lines partly in modern spelling for you, that you may get the sense better:—

I, kneeling by this flower, in good intent,
 Abode, to know what all the people meant,
 As still as any stone; till at the last
 The God of Love on me his eyen cast
 And said, “Who kneeleth there?” And I answered
 Unto his asking,
 And said, “Sir, it am I,” and came him near
 And salued him.—Quoth he, “What dost thou here
 So nigh mine own flower, so boldly?
 It were better worthy, truly,
 A worm to nighen near my flower than thou.”
 And why, Sir,” quoth I, “an it like you?”
 “For thou,” quoth he, “art nothing thereto able,
 It is my relike, digne, and deli^able.

And thou my foe, and all my folk worriest.*
And of mine old servants thou missayest."

But it is only for evil speaking of ladies that Chaucer felt his conscience thus pricked,—chiefly of Cressida; whereas, I have written the lines for you because it is the very curse of this age that we speak evil alike of ladies and knights, and all that made them noble in past days;—nay, of saints also; and I have, for first business, next January, to say what I can for our own St. George, against the enlightened modern American view of him, that he was nothing better than a swindling bacon-seller (good enough, indeed, so, for us, *now*!)

But to come back to the house that Jack built. You will want to know, next, whether Jack ever *did* build it. I believe, in veritable bricks and mortar—no; in veritable limestone and cave-catacomb, perhaps, yes; it is no matter how; *somehow*, you see, Jack must have built it, for there is the picture of it on the coin of the town. He built it, just as St. George killed the dragon; so that you put a picture of him also on the coin of *your* town.

Not but that the real and artful labyrinth might have been, for all we know. A very real one, indeed, was built by twelve brotherly kings in Egypt, in two

* Chaucer's real word means "warrest with all my folk;" but it was so closely connected with "weary" and "worry" in association of sound, in his days, that I take the last as nearest the sense.

stories, one for men to live in, the other for crocodiles; —and the upper story was visible and wonderful to all eyes, in authentic times: whereas, we know of no one who ever saw Jack's labyrinth: and yet, curiously enough, the real labyrinth set the pattern of nothing; while Jack's ghostly labyrinth has set the pattern of almost everything linear and complex, since; and the pretty spectre of it blooms at this hour, in vital hawthorn for you, every spring, at Hampton Court.

Now, in the pictures of this imaginary maze, you are to note that both the Cretan and Lucchese designs agree in being composed of a single path or track, coiled, and recoiled, on itself. Take a piece of flexible chain and lay it down, considering the chain itself as the path: and, without an interruption, it will trace any of the three figures. (The two Cretan ones are indeed the same in design, except in being, one square, and the other round.) And recollect, upon this, that the word "Labyrinth" properly means "rope-walk," or "coil-of-rope-walk," its first syllable being probably also the same as our English name "Laura," 'the path,' and its method perfectly given by Chaucer in the single line—"And, for the house is crenkled to and fro." And on this, note farther, first, that *had* the walls been real, instead of ghostly, there would have been no difficulty whatever in getting either out or in, for you could go no other way. But if the walls were spectral, and yet the transgression of them made your final en-

trance or return impossible, Ariadne's clue was needful in deed.

Note, secondly, that the question seems not at all to have been about getting in; but getting *out* again. The clue, at all events, could be helpful only after you had carried it in; and if the spider, or other monster in midweb, ate you, the help in your clue, for return, would be insignificant. So that this thread of Ariadne's implied that even victory over the monster would be vain, unless you could disentangle yourself from his web also.

So much you may gather from coin or carving: next, we try tradition. Theseus, as I said before, is the great settler or law-giver of the Athenian state; but he is so eminently as the Peace-maker, causing men to live in fellowship who before lived separate, and making roads passable that were infested by robbers or wild beasts. He is the exterminator of every bestial and savage element, and the type of human, or humane power, which power you will find in this, and all my other books on policy, summed in the terms, "Gentleness and Justice." The Greeks dwelt chiefly in their thoughts on the last, and Theseus, representing the first, has therefore most difficulty in dealing with questions of punishment, and criminal justice.

Now the justice of the Greeks was enforced by three great judges, who lived in three islands. Æacus who lived in the island of Ægina, is the administrator of distributive, or 'dividing' justice; which relates

chiefly to property, and his subjects, as being people of industrious temper, were once ants; afterwards called Ant-people, or 'Myrmidons.'

Secondly, Minos, who lived in the island of Crete, was the judge who punished crime, of whom presently; finally, Rhadamanthus, called always by Homer "golden," or "glowing" Rhadamanthus, was the judge who rewarded virtue; and he lived in a blessed island covered with flowers, but which eye of man hath not yet seen, nor has any living ear heard lisp of wave on that shore.

For the very essence and primal condition of virtue is that it shall not know of, nor believe in, any blessed islands, till it find them, it may be, in due time.

And of these three judges, two were architects, but the third only a gardener. Æacus helped the gods to build the walls of Troy, Minos appointed the labyrinth in coils round the Minotaur; but Rhadamanthus only set trees, with golden fruit on them, beside waters of comfort, and overlaid the calm waves with lilies.

They *did* these things, I tell you, in very truth, cloud-hidden indeed; but the things themselves are with us to this day. No town on earth is more real than that town of Troy. Her prince, long ago, was dragged dead round the walls that Æacus built; but her principedom did not die with him. Only a few weeks since, I was actually standing, as I told you, with my good friend Mr. Parker, watching the lizards

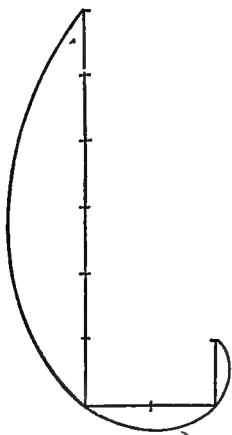
play among the chinks in the walls built by Æacus, for his wandering Trojans, by Tiber side. And, perhaps within memory of man, some of you may have walked up or down Tower Street, little thinking that its tower was also built by Æacus, for his wandering Trojans and their Cæsar, by Thames side: and on Tower Hill itself—where I had my pocket picked only the other day by some of the modern Æacidæ—stands the English Mint, “dividing” gold and silver which Æacus, first of all Greeks, divided in his island of Ægina, and struck into intelligible money-stamp and form, that men might render to Cæsar the things which *are* Cæsar’s.

But the Minos labyrinth is more real yet; at all events, more real for *us*. And what it was, and is, as you have seen at Lucca, you shall hear at Florence, where you are to learn Dante’s opinion upon it, and Sandro Botticelli shall draw it for us.

That Hell, which so many people think the only place Dante gives any account of (yet seldom know his account even of that), was, he tells you, divided into upper, midmost, and nether pits. You usually lose sight of this main division of it, in the more complex one of the nine circles; but remember, these are divided in diminishing proportion: six of them are the upper hell; two, the midmost; one, the lowest.* You will find

* The deepening orders of sin, in the nine circles, are briefly these, —1. Unredeemed nature; 2. Lust; 3. Gluttony; 4. Avarice; 5 Dis-

this a very pretty and curious proportion. Here it is in labyrinthine form, putting the three dimensions at right



angles to each other, and drawing a spiral round them. I show you it in a spiral line, because the idea of descent is in Dante's mind, spiral (as of a worm's or serpent's coil) throughout; even to the mode of Geryon's flight, "*runta e discende*;" and Minos accordingly indicates which circle any sinner is to be sent to, in a most graphically labyrinthine manner, by twisting his tail round himself so many times, necessarily thus marking the level.

The uppermost and least dreadful hell, divided into six circles, is the hell of those who cannot rightly govern themselves, but have no mind to do mischief to any one else. In the lowest circle of this, and within the same walls with the more terrible mid-hell, whose stench even comes up and reaches to them, are people who have not rightly governed their *thoughts*: and these are buried for ever in fiery tombs, and their

content; 6. Heresy; 7. Open violence; 8. Fraudful violence; 9. Treachery. But they are curiously dove-tailed together,—serpent-tailed, I should say,—by closer coil, not expanding plume. You shall understand the joiner's work next month.

thoughts thus governed to purpose; which you, my friends, who are so fond of freedom of thought, and freedom of the press, may wisely meditate on.

Then the two lower hells are for those who have wilfully done mischief to other people. And of these, some do open injury, and some, deceitful injury, and of these the rogues are put the lower; but there is a greater distinction in the manner of sin, than its simplicity or roguery:—namely, whether it be done in hot blood or cold blood. The injurious sins, done in hot blood—that is to say, under the influence of passion—are in the midmost hell; but the sins done in cold blood, without passion, or, more accurately, contrary to passion, far down *below* the freezing point, are put in the lowest hell: the ninth circle.

Now, little as you may think it, or as the friend thought it, who tried to cure me of jesting the other day, I should not have taken upon me to write this *Fors*, if I had not, in some degree, been cured of jesting long ago; and in the same way that Dante was,—for in my poor and faltering path I have myself been taken far enough down among the diminished circles to see this nether hell—the hell of Traitors; and to know, what people do not usually know of treachery, that it is not the fraud, but the *cold-heartedness*, which is chiefly dreadful in it. Therefore, this nether Hell is of ice, not fire; and of ice that nothing can break.

“ Oh, ill-starred folk,
 Beyond all others wretched, who abide
 In such a mansion as scarce thought finds words
 To speak of, better had ye here on earth
 Been flocks, or mountain goats.

* * *

I saw, before, and underneath my feet,
 A lake, whose frozen surface liker seemed
 To glass than water. Not so thick a veil
 In winter e'er hath Austrian Danube spread
 O'er his still course, nor Tanais, far remote
 Under the chilling sky. Rolled o'er that mass
 Had Tabernich or Pietrapana fallen
 Not even its rim had creaked.

As peeps the frog,
 Croaking above the wave,—what time in dreams
 The village gleaner oft pursues her toil,—
 Blue-pinched, and shrined in ice, the spirits stood,
 Moving their teeth in shrill note, like the stork.”

No more wandering of the feet in labyrinth like this, and the eyes, once cruelly tearless, now blind with frozen tears. But the midmost hell, for hot-blooded sinners, has other sort of lakes,—as, for instance, you saw a little while ago, of hot pitch, in which one bathes otherwise than in Serchio—(the Serchio is the river at Lucca, and Pietrapana a Lucchese mountain). But observe,—for here we get to our main work again,—the great boiling lake on the Phlegethon of this upper hell country is *red*, not black; and its source, as well as that of the river which freezes beneath, is in this island of Crete! in the Mount Ida, “joyous once with leaves and streams.” You must look to the passage yourselves—*Inferno*, XIV. (line 120 in

Carey)—for I have not room for it now. The first sight of it, to Dante, is as “a little brook, whose crimsoned wave Yet lifts my hair with horror.” Virgil makes him look at this spring as the notablest thing seen by him in hell, since he entered its gate; but the great lake of it is under a ruinous mountain, like the fallen Alp through which the Adige foams down to Verona;—and on the crest of this ruin lies crouched the enemy of Theseus—the Minotaur:

“ And there,
At point of the disparted ridge, lay stretched
The infamy of Crete—at sight of us
It gnawed itself, *as one with rage distract.*
To him my guide exclaimed, ‘Perchance thou deem’st
The King of Athens here.’ ”

Of whom and of his enemy, I have time to tell you no more to-day—except only that this Minotaur is the type or embodiment of the two essentially bestial sins of Anger and Lust;—that both these are in the human nature, interwoven inextricably with its chief virtue, Love, so that Dante makes this very ruin of the Rocks of hell, on which the Minotaur is couched, to be wrought on them at the instant when “the Universe was thrilled with love,”—(the last moment of the Crucifixion)—and that the labyrinth of these passions is one not fabulous, nor only pictured on coins of Crete. And the right interweaving of Anger with Love, in criminal justice, is the main question in earthly law, which the Athenian lawgiver had to deal

with. Look, if you can, at my introductory Lectures at Oxford, p. 83; and so I must leave Theseus for this time;—in next letter, which will be chiefly on Christmas cheer, I must really try to get as far as his vegetable soup.

As for *Æacus*, and his coining business, we must even let them alone now, till next year; only I have to thank some readers who have written to me on the subject of interest of money (one or two complaining that I had dismissed it too summarily, when, alas! I am only at the threshold of it!), and, especially, my reader for the press, who has referred me to a delightful Italian book, *Teoremi di Politica Cristiana*, (Naples, 1830), and copied out ever so much of it for me; and Mr. Sillar, for farther most useful letters, of which to-day I can only quote this postscript:—

“Please note that your next number of *Fors Clavigera* ought to be in the hands of your readers on Friday, the 1st, or Saturday, the 2nd, of November. The following day being Sunday, the 3rd, there will be read in every church in England, or in the world, where the Church Service is used, the 15th Psalm, which distinctly declares the man who shall ascend to God’s holy hill to be him who, amongst other things, has not put forth his money upon usury; a verse impiously ignored in most of the metrical versions of the Psalms; those adapted to popular tunes or popular prejudices.”

I think, accordingly, that some of my readers may

be glad to have a sounder version of that Psalm; and as the 14th is much connected with it, and will be variously useful to us afterwards, here they both are, done into verse by an English squire,—or his sister, for they alike could rhyme; and the last finished singing what her brother left unsung, the Third Fors having early put seal on his lips.

PSALM XIV.—(*Dixit Insipiens.*)

THE foolish man by flesh and fancy ledd,
His guilty hart with this fond thought hath fed:

There is noe God that raigneth.

And so thereafter he and all his mates
Do workes, which earth corrupt, and Heaven hates:

Not one that good remaineth.

Even God him self sent down his piercing ey,
If of this clayy race he could espy

One, that his wisdome learneth.

And loe, he findes that all a strayeng went:
All plung'd in stincking filth, not one well bent,

Not one that God discerneth.

O maddnes of these folkes, thus loosly ledd!
These caniballs, who, as if they were bread,

Gods people do devower:

Nor ever call on God; but they shall quake
More than they now do bragg, when he shall take

The just into his power.

Inaeede the poore, opprest by you, you mock:
 Their counsell are your common jesting stock:
 But God is their recomfort.

Ah, when from Syon shall the Saver come,
 That Jacob, freed by thee, may glad become
 And Israel full of comfort?

PSALM XV.—(*Domine, quis habitabit.*)

IN tabernacle thine, O Lord, who shall remaine?
 Lord, of thy holy hill, who shall the rest obtain?
 Ev'n he that leades a life of uncorrupted traine
 Whose deeds of righteous hart, whose harty wordes be
 plain:

Who with deceitfull tongue hath never us'd to faine;
 Nor neighbour hurtes by deede, nor doth with slander
 stain:

Whose eyes a person vile doth hold in vile disdaine,
 But doth, with honour greate, the godly entertaine:
 Who othe and promise given doth faithfully maintain,
 Although some worldly losse thereby he may sustain;
 From bityng usury who ever doth refraine:
 Who sells not guiltlesse cause for filthy love of gain,
 Who thus proceedes for ay, in sacred mount shall raig.

You may not like this old English at first; but, if you can find anybody to read it to you who has an ear, its cadence is massy and grand, more than that of most verse I know, and never a word is lost. Whether

you like it or not, the sense of it is true, and the way to the sacred mount (of which, mounts whether of Pity, or of Roses, are but shadows,) told you for once, straight-forwardly,—on which road I wish you God-speed.

Ever faithfully yours,

JOHN RUSKIN.

LETTER XXIV.

CORPUS CHRISTI COLL.,

MY FRIENDS,

November 7th, 1872.

I SHALL not call you so any more, after this Christmas; first, because things have chanced to me, of late, which have made me too sulky to be friends with anybody; secondly, because in the two years during which I have been writing these letters, not one of you has sent me a friendly word of answer; lastly, because, even if you *were* my friends, it would be waste print to call you so, once a month. Nor shall I sign myself “faithfully yours” any more; being very far from faithfully my own, and having found most other people anything but faithfully mine. Nor shall I sign my name, for I never like the look of it; being, I apprehend, only short for “Rough Skin,” in the sense of “Pigskin”; (and indeed, the planet under which I was born, Saturn, has supreme power over pigs.)—nor can I find historical mention of any other form of the name, except one I made no reference to when it occurred, as that of the leading devil of four, Red-skin—Blue-skin—and I forget the skins of the other two—who performed in a religious play, of the fourteenth century, which was nearly as comic as the religious earnest of our own century. So that the letters will begin, henceforward, without address; and close with-

out signature. You will probably know whom they come from, and I don't in the least care whom they go to.

I was in London, all day yesterday, where the weather was as disinal as is its wont; and, returning here by the evening train, saw, with astonishment, the stars extricate themselves from the fog, and the moon glow for a little while in her setting, over the southern Berkshire hills, as I breathed on the platform at the Reading station;—(for there were six people in the carriage and they had shut both windows).

When I got to Oxford, the sky was entirely clear; the great Bear was near the ground under the pole, and the Charioteer high over-head, the principal star of him as bright as a gas-lamp.

It is a curious default in the stars, to my mind, that there is a Charioteer among them without a chariot, and a Waggon with no waggoner; nor any waggon, for that matter, except the Bear's stomach; but I have always wanted to know the history of the absent Charles, who must have stopped, I suppose to drink, while his cart went on, and so never got to be stellified himself. I wish I knew; but I can tell you less about him than even about Theseus. The Charioteer's story is pretty, however:—he gave his life for a kiss, and did not get it; got made into stars instead. It would be a dainty tale to tell you under the mistletoe: perhaps I may have time next year: to-day it is of the stars of Ariadne's crown I want to speak.

But that giving one's life for a kiss, and not getting it,

is indeed a general abstract of the Greek notion of heroism, and its reward; and, by the way, does it not seem to you a grave defect in the stars, at Christmas time, that all their stories are Greek—not one Christian? In all the east, and all the west, there is not a space of heaven with a Christian story in it; the star of the Wise men having risen but once, and set, it seems for ever; and the stars of Foolish men—innumerable, but unintelligible, forming, I suppose, all across the sky that broad way of Asses' milk; while a few Greek heroes and hunters, a monster or two, and some crustaceous animals, occupy, here in the north, our heaven's compass, down to the very margin of the illuminated book. A sky quite good enough for us, nevertheless, for all the use we make of it, either by night or day—or any hope we have of getting into it—or any inclination we have, while still out of it, to “take stars for money.”

Yet, with all deference to George Herbert, I will take them for nothing of the sort. Money is an entirely pleasant and proper thing to have, itself; and the first shilling I ever got in my life, I put in a pill-box, and put it under my pillow, and couldn't sleep all night for satisfaction. I couldn't have done that with a star; though truly the pretty system of usury makes the stars drop down something else than dew. I got a note from an arithmetical friend the other day, speaking of the death of “an old lady, a cousin of mine, who left—*left*, because she could not take it with her—200,000%. On calculation, I found this old

lady who has been lying bedridden for a year, was accumulating money (*i.e.* the results of other people's labour), at the rate of 4d. a minute ; in other words, she awoke in the morning ten pounds richer than she went to bed. At which, doubtless, and the like miracles throughout the world, "the stars with deep amaze, stand fixed with steadfast gaze;" for this is, indeed, a Nativity of an adverse god to the one you profess to honour, with them, and the angels, at Christmas, by over-eating yourselves.

I suppose that is the quite essential part of the religion of Christmas ; and, indeed, it is about the most religious thing you do in the year ; and if pious people would understand, generally, that, if there be indeed any other God than Mammon, He likes to see people comfortable, and nicely dressed, as much as Mammon likes to see them fasting and in rags, they might set a wiser example to everybody than they do. I am frightened out of my wits, every now and then, here at Oxford, by seeing something come out of poor people's houses, all dressed in black down to the ground ; which, (having been much thinking of wicked things lately), I at first take for the Devil, and then find, to my extreme relief and gratification, that it's a Sister of Charity. Indeed, the only serious disadvantage of eating, and fine dressing, considered as religious ceremonies, whether at Christmas, or on Sunday, in the Sunday dinner and Sunday gown,—is that you don't always clearly understand what the eating and dressing signify. For example : why should Sunday be kept otherwise than

Christmas, and be less merry? Because it is a day of rest, commemorating the fulfilment of God's easy work, while Christmas is a day of toil, commemorating the beginning of his difficult work? Is that the reason? Or because Christmas commemorates His stooping to thirty years of sorrow, and Sunday His rising to countless years of joy? Which should be the gladdest day of the two, think you, on either ground? Why haven't you Sunday pantomimes?

It is a strait and sore question with me, for when I was a child, I lost the pleasure of some three-sevenths of my life because of Sunday; for I always had a way of looking forward to things, and a lurid shade was cast over the whole of Friday and Saturday by the horrible sense that Sunday was coming, and inevitable. Not that I was rebellious against my good mother or aunts in any wise; feeling only that we were all crushed under a relentless fate; which was indeed the fact, for neither they nor I had the least idea what Holiness meant, beyond what I find stated very clearly by Mr. David—the pious author of “the Paradezeal system of Botany, an arrangement representing the whole globe as a vast blooming and fruitful Paradise,” that “Holiness is a knowledge of the Ho's.”

My mother, indeed, never went so far as my aunt; nor carried her religion down to the ninth or glacial circle of Holiness, by giving me cold dinner; and to this day, I am apt to over-eat myself with Yorkshire pudding, in remembrance of the consolation it used to afford me at one

o'clock. Good Friday, also, was partly "intermeddled," as Chaucer would call it, with light and shade, because there were hot-cross-buns at breakfast, though we had to go to church afterwards. And, indeed, I observe, happening to have under my hand the account in the *Daily Telegraph* of Good Friday at the Crystal Palace, in 1870, that its observance is for your sakes also now "intermeddled" similarly, with light and shade, by conscientious persons: for, in that year, "whereas in former years the performances had been exclusively of a religious character, the directors had supplemented their programme with secular amusements." It was, I suppose, considered "secular" that the fountains should play (though I have noticed that natural ones persist in that profane practice on Sunday also), and accordingly, "there was a very abundant water-supply, while a brilliant sun gave many lovely prismatic effects to the fleeting and changeful spray" (not careful, even the sun, for his part, to remember how once he became "black as sackcloth of hair"). "A striking feature presented itself to view in the shape of the large and handsome pavilion of Howe and Cushing's American circus. This vast pavilion occupies the whole centre of the grand terrace, and was gaily decorated with bunting and fringed with the show-carriages of the circus, which were bright with gilding, mirrors, portraits, and scarlet panels. The out-door amusements began"—(the English public always retaining a distinct impression that this festival was instituted in the East)—

“with an Oriental procession”—(by the way, why don’t we always call Wapping the Oriental end of London?)—of fifteen camels from the circus, mounted by negroes wearing richly-coloured and bespangled Eastern costume. The performances then commenced, and continued throughout the day, the attractions comprising the trained wolves, the wonderful monkeys, and the usual scenes in the circle.”

“There was darkness over all the earth until the ninth hour.” I often wonder, myself, how long it will be, in the crucifixion afresh, which all the earth has now resolved upon, crying with more unanimous shout than ever the Jews, “Not this man, but Barabbas”—before the Ninth Hour comes.

Assuming, however, that, for the nonce, trained wolves and wonderful monkeys are proper entertainments on Good Friday, pantomimes on Boxing-day, and sermons on Sunday, have you ever considered what observance might be due to Saturday,—the day on which He “preached to the spirits in prison?” for that seems to me quite the part of the three days’ work which most of us might first hope for a share in. I don’t know whether any of you perceive that your spirits are in prison. I know mine is, and that I would fain have it preached to, and delivered, if it be possible. For, however far and steep the slope may have been into the hell which you say every Sunday that you believe He descended into, there are places trenched deep enough

now in all our hearts for the hot lake of Phlegethon to leak and ooze into: and the rock of their shore is no less hard than in Dante's time.

And as your winter rejoicings, if they mean anything at all, mean that you have now, at least, a chance of deliverance from that prison, I will ask you to take the pains to understand what the bars and doors of it are, as the wisest man who has yet spoken of them tells you.

There is first, observe, this great distinction in his mind between the penalties of the Hell, and the joy of Paradise. The penalty is assigned to definite act of hand; the joy, to definite state of mind. It is questioned of no one, either in the Purgatory or the Paradise, what he has done; but only what evil feeling is still in his heart, or what good, when purified wholly, his nature is noble enough to receive.

On the contrary, Hell is constituted such by the one great negative state of being without Love or Fear of God;—there are no degrees of that State; but there are more or less dreadful sins which can be done in it, according to the degradation of the unredeemed Human nature. And men are judged according to their works.

To give a single instance. The punishment of the fourth circle in Hell is for the *Misuse* of Money, for having either sinfully kept it, or sinfully spent it. But the pain in Purgatory is only for having sinfully *Loved*

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Truly, my soul cleaves to the dust of such things. But I have not so perverted my soul, nor palsied my brains, as to expect to be advantaged by that adhesion. I don't expect, because I have gathered much, to find Nature or man gathering for me more:—to find eighteen-pence in my pill-box in the morning, instead of a shilling, as a "reward for continence;" or to make an income of my Koran by lending it to poor scholars. If I think a scholar can read it,—(N.B., I can't, myself,)—and would like to—and will carefully turn the leaves by the outside edge, he is welcome to read it for nothing: if he has got into the habit of turning leaves by the middle, or of wetting his finger, and shuffling up the corners, as I see my banker's clerks do with their ledgers, for no amount of money shall he read it. (Incidentally, note the essential vulgarity of doing *anything* in a hurry.)

So that my mind and brains are in fact untainted and unwarped by lust of money, and I am free in that respect from the power of the Infamy of Crete.

I used the words just above—Furies of Phlegethon. You are beginning to know something of the Fates: of the Furies also you must know something.

The pit of Dante's central hell is reserved for those who have actually committed *malicious* crime, involving mercilessness to their neighbour, or, in suicide, to themselves. But it is necessary to serpent-tail this pit with the upper hell by a district for insanity without deed; the Fury which has brought horror to the eyes, and hard

ness to the heart, and yet, having possessed itself of noble persons, issues in no malicious crime. Therefore the sixth circle of the upper hell is walled in, together with the central pit, as one grievous city of the dead; and at the gates of it the warders are fiends, and the watchers Furies.

Watchers, observe, as sleepless. Once in their companionship,

Nor poppy, nor mandragora,
Nor all the drowsy syrups of the world,
Shall ever medicine thee to that sweet sleep
Which thou owed'st yesterday.

Sleepless and merciless; and yet in the Greek vision of them which Æschylus wrote, they are first seen asleep; and they remain in the city of Theseus, in mercy.

Elsewhere, furies that make the eyes evil and the heart hard. Seeing Dante from their watch-tower, they call for Medusa. "So will we make flint of him" ("enamel," rather—which has been in the furnace first, then hardened); but Virgil puts his hands over his eyes.

Thus the upper hell is knitted to the central. The central is half joined to the lower by the power of Fraud: only in the central hell, though in a deeper pit of it, (Phlegethon falls into the abyss in a Niagara of blood) Fraud is still joined with human passion, but in the nether hell is passionate no more; the traitors have not natures of flesh or of fire, but of earth; and the earth-giants, the first enemies of Athena, the Greek spirit of Life, stand

about the pit, speechless, as towers of war. In a bright morning, this last midsummer, at Bologna, I was standing in the shade of the tower of Garisenda, which Dante says they were like. The sun had got just behind its battlements, and sent out rays round them as from behind a mountain peak, vast and grey against the morning sky. I may be able to get some picture of it, for the January *Fors*, perhaps; and perchance the sun may some day rise for us from behind our Towers of Treachery.

Note but this farther, and then we will try to get out of Hell for to-day. The divisions of the central fire are under three creatures, all of them partly man, partly animal. The Minotaur has a man's body, a bull's head, (which is precisely the general type of the English nation to-day). The Centaur Chiron has a horse's body; a man's head and breast. The Spirit of Fraud, Geryon, has a serpent's body, his face is that of a just man, and his breast chequered like a lizard's, with labyrinthine lines.

All these three creatures signify the mingling of a brutal instinct with the human mind; but, in the Minotaur, the brute rules, the humanity is subordinate; in the Centaur, the man rules, and the brute is subordinate; in the third, the man and the animal are in harmony; and both false.

Of the Centaurs, Chiron and Nessus, one, the type of human gentleness, justice, and wisdom, stooping to join itself with the nature of animals, and to be healed by the herbs of the ground,—the other, the destruction of Her-

cules,—you shall be told in the *Fors* of January: to-day I must swiftly sum the story of Theseus.

His conquest of the Minotaur, the chief glory of his life, is possible only to him through love, and love's hope and help. But he has no joy either of love or victory. Before he has once held Ariadne in his arms, Diana kills her in the isle of Naxos. Jupiter crowns her in heaven where there is no following her. Theseus returns to Athens alone.

The ship which hitherto had carried the Minotaur's victims only, bore always a black sail. Theseus had received from his father a purple one, to hoist instead, if he returned victorious.

The common and senseless story is that he forgot to hoist it. Forgot! A sail is so inconspicuous a part of a ship! and one is so likely to forget one's victory, returning, with home seen on the horizon! But he returned *not* victorious, at least for himself;—Diana and Death had been too strong for him. He bore the black sail. And his father, when he saw it, threw himself from the rock of Athens, and died.

Of which the meaning is, that we must not mourn for *ourselves*, lest a worse thing happen to us,—a Greek lesson much to be remembered by Christians about to send expensive orders to the undertaker: unless, indeed, they mean by their black vestments to tell the world that they think their friends are in hell. If in heaven, with Ariadne and the gods, are we to mourn? And if

they were fit for Heaven, are we, for ourselves, ever to leave off mourning? Yet Theseus, touching the beach, is too just and wise to mourn *there*. He sends a herald to the city to tell his father he is safe; stays on the shore to sacrifice to the gods, and feast his sailors. He sacrifices; and makes pottage for them there on the sand. The herald returns to tell him his father is dead also. Such welcome has he for his good work, in the islands, and on the main.

In which work he persists, no less, and is redeemed from darkness by Hercules, and at last helps Hercules himself in his sorest need—as you shall hear afterwards. I must stop to-day at the vegetable soup,—which you would think, I suppose, poor Christmas cheer. Plum-pudding is an Egyptian dish; but have you ever thought how many stories were connected with this Athenian one, pottage of lentils? A bargain of some importance, even to us, (especially as usurers); and the healing miracle of Elisha; and the vision of Habakkuk as he was bearing their pottage to the reapers, and had to take it far away to one who needed it more; and, chiefly of all, the soup of the bitter herbs, with its dipped bread and faithful company,—“he it is to whom I shall give the sop, when I have dipped it.” The meaning of which things, roughly, is, first, that we are not to sell our birth-rights for pottage, though we fast to death; but are diligently to know and keep them: secondly, that we are to poison no man’s pottage, mental or real: lastly, that

we look to it lest we betray the hand which gives us our daily bread.

Lessons to be pondered on at Christmas time over our pudding; and the more, because the sops we are dipping for each other, and even for our own children, are not always the most nourishing, nor are the rooms in which we make ready their last supper always carefully furnished. Take, for instance, this example of last supper—(no, I see it is breakfast)—in Chicksand Street, Mile End :—

On Wednesday an inquest was held on the body of Annie Redfern, aged twenty-eight, who was found dead in a cellar at 5, Chicksand Street, Mile End, on the morning of last Sunday. This unfortunate woman was a fruit-seller, and rented the cellar in which she died at 1s. 9d. per week—her only companion being a little boy, aged three years, of whom she was the mother. It appeared from the evidence of the surgeon who was summoned to see the deceased when her body was discovered on Sunday morning that she had been dead some hours before his arrival. Her knees were drawn up and her arms folded in such a position as to show that she died with her child clasped in her arms. The room was very dark, without any ventilation, and was totally unfit for human habitation. The cause of death was effusion of serum into the pericardium, brought on greatly by living in such a wretched dwelling. The coroner said that as there were so many of these wretched dwellings about, he hoped the jurymen who were connected with the vestry would take care to represent the case to the proper authorities, and see that the place was not let as a dwelling again. This remark from the coroner incited a jurymen to reply, "Oh, if we were to do that we might empty half the houses in London; there are thousands more like that, and worse." Some of the jurors objected to the room being condemned; the majority, however, refused to sign the papers unless this was done, and a verdict was returned in accordance with the evidence. It transpired that the body had to be removed to save

it from the rats. If the little child who lay clasped in his dead mother's arms has not been devoured by these animals, he is probably now in the workhouse, and will remain a burden on the ratepayers, who unfortunately have no means of making the landlord of the foul den that destroyed his mother answerable for his support.

I miss, out of the column of the *Pall Mall* for the 1st of this month, one paragraph after this, and proceed to the next but one, which relates to the enlightened notion among English young women, derived from Mr. J. Stuart Mill—that the “career” of the Madonna is too limited a one, and that modern political economy can provide them, as the *Pall Mall* observes, with “much more lucrative occupations than that of nursing the baby.” But you must know, first, that the Athenians always kept memory of Theseus’ pot of vegetable soup, and of his sacrifice, by procession in spring-time, bearing a rod wreathed with lambs’-wool, and singing an Easter carol, in these words:—

“Fair staff, may the gods grant, by thee, the bringing of figs to us, and buttery cakes, and honey in bulging cups, and the sopping of oil, and wine in flat cups, easy to lift, that thou mayest” (meaning that *we* may, but not clear which is which,) “get drunk and sleep.”

Which Mr. Stuart Mill and modern political economy have changed into a pretty Christmas carol for English children, lambs for whom the fair staff also brings wine of a certain sort, in flat cups, “that they may get drunk, and sleep.” Here is the next paragraph from the *Pall Mall*:—

One of the most fertile causes of excessive infant mortality is the extensive practice in manufacturing districts of insidiously narcotising young children that they may be the more conveniently laid aside when more lucrative occupations present themselves than that of nursing the baby. Hundreds of gallons of opium in various forms are sold weekly in many districts for this purpose. Nor is it likely that the practice will be checked until juries can be induced to take a rather severe view of the suddenly fatal misadventures which this sort of chronic poisoning not unfrequently produces. It appears, however, to be very difficult to persuade them to look upon it as other than a venial offence. An inquest was recently held at Chapel Gate upon the body of an infant who had died from the administration by its mother of about twelve times the proper dose of laudanum. The bottle was labelled carefully with a caution that "opium should not be given to children under seven years of age." In this case five drops of laudanum were given to a baby of eighteen months. The medical evidence was of a quite unmistakable character, and the coroner in summing up read to the jury a definition of manslaughter, and told them that "a lawful act if dangerous, not attended with such care as would render the probability of danger very small, and resulting in death, would amount to manslaughter at the least. Then in this case they must return a verdict of manslaughter unless they could find any circumstance which would take it out of the rule of law he had laid down to them. It was not in evidence that the mother had used any caution at all in administering the poison." Nevertheless, the jury returned, after a short interval, the verdict of homicide by misadventure.

"Hush-a-bye, baby, upon the tree top," my mother used to sing to me ; and I remember the dawn of intelligence in which I began to object to the bad rhyme which followed—"when the wind blows, the cradle will rock." But the Christmas winds must blow rudely, and warp the waters askance indeed, which rock our English cradles now.

Mendelssohn's songs without words have been, I believe, lately popular in musical circles. We shall, perhaps, require cradle songs with very few words, and Christmas carols with very sad ones, before long; in fact, it seems to me, we are fast losing our old skill in carolling. There is a different tone in Chaucer's notion of it (though this carol of his is in spring-time indeed, not at Christmas):—

Then went I forth on my right hand,
 Down by a little path I found,
 Of Mintes full, and Fennel green.
 * * * * *
 Sir Mirth I found, and right anon
 Unto Sir Mirth gan I gone,
 There, where he was, him to solace :
 And with him, in that happy place,
 So fair folke and so fresh, had he,
 That when I saw, I wondered me
 From whence such folke might come,
 So fair were they, all and some ;
 For they were like, as in my sight
 To angels, that be feathered bright.
 These folk, of which I tell you so,
 Upon a karole wenten tho,*
 A ladie karoled them, that hight†
 Gladnesse, blissful and light.
 She could make in song such refraining
 It sate her wonder well to sing,
 Her voice full clear was, and full sweet,
 She was not rude, nor unmeet,
 But couth‡ enough for such doing,
 As longeth unto karolling ;
 For she was wont, in every place,
 To singen first, men to solace.
 For singing most she gave her to,
 No craft had she so lefe§ to do.

* Went *then* in measure of a carol-dance.

† Was called.

‡ Skilful.

§ Fond.

Mr. Stuart Mill would have set her to another craft, I fancy (not but that singing is a lucrative one, now-a-day, if it be shrill enough); but you will not get your wives to sing thus for nothing, if you send them out to earn their dinners (instead of earning them yourselves for them), and put their babies summarily to sleep.

It is curious how our English feeling seems to be changed also towards two other innocent kind of creatures. In nearly all German pictures of the Nativity, (I have given you an Italian one of the Magi for a frontispiece, this time), the dove is one way or other conspicuous, and the little angels round the cradle are nearly always, when they are tired, allowed by the Madonna to play with rabbits. And in the very garden in which Ladie Gladness leads her karol-dance, "connis," as well as squirrels, are among the happy company; frogs only, as you shall hear, not being allowed; the French says, no flies either, of the watery sort! For the path among the mint and fennel greene leads us into this garden:—

The garden was by measuring,
 Right even and square in compasing :
 It was long as it was large,
 Of fruit had every tree his charge,
 And many homely trees there were.*
 That peaches, coines,† and apples bare,
 Medlers, plonmes, peerers, chesteinis,
 Cherise, of which many one faine‡ is,

* There were foreign trees besides. I insert bits here and there, without putting stars, to interrupt the pieces given.

† Quinces.

‡ Fond.

With many a high laurel and pine
 Was ranged clean all that gardene.
 There might men Does and Roes see,
 And of squirrels ful great plentee
 From bough to bough alway leping ;
 Connis there were also playing
 And maden many a tourneying
 Upon the fresh grass springing.
 In places saw I wells there
 In which no frogges were.
 There sprang the violet all new
 And fresh pervinke, rich of hue,
 And flowers yellow, white and rede,
 Such plenty grew there never in mede,
 Full gay was all the ground, and quaint,
 And poudred, as men had it peint
 With many a fresh and sundry flour
 That castes up full good savour.

So far for an old English garden, or “pleasance,” and the pleasures of it. Now take a bit of description written this year, of a modern English garden or pleasance, and the pleasures of *it*, and newly invented odours:—

In a short time the sportsmen issued from the (new ?) hall, and, accompanied by sixty or seventy attendants, bent their steps towards that part of the park in which the old hall is situate. Here were the rabbit covers—large patches of rank fern, three or four feet in height, and extending over many acres. The doomed rabbits, assiduously driven from the burrows during the preceding week by the keepers, forced from their lodgings beneath the tree-roots by the suffocating fumes of sulphur, and deterred from returning thither by the application of gas-tar to the “runs,” had been forced to seek shelter in the fern patch ; and here they literally swarmed. At the edge of the ferns a halt was called, and the head gamekeeper proceeded to arrange his assistants in the most approved “beating” fashion. The shooting party, nine in number, including the prince, distributed themselves in advance of the line of beaters, and the word “Forward !” was

given. Simultaneously the line of beaters moved into the cover, vigorously thrashing the long ferns with their stout sticks, and giving vent to a variety of uncouth ejaculations, which it was supposed were calculated to terrify the hidden rabbits. Hardly had the beaters proceeded half-a-dozen yards when the cover in front of them became violently agitated, and rabbits were seen running in all directions. The quantity of game thus started was little short of marvellous—the very ground seemed to be alive. Simultaneously with the appearance of the terrified animals the slaughter commenced. Each sportsman carried a double-barrelled breechloader, and an attendant followed him closely, bearing an additional gun, ready loaded. The shooter discharged both barrels of his gun, in some cases with only the interval of a second or two, and immediately exchanged it for a loaded one. Rabbits fell in all directions. The warning cry of “Rabbit!” from the relentless keepers was heard continuously, and each cry was as quickly followed by the sharp crack of a gun—a pretty sure indication that the rabbit referred to had come to an untimely end, as the majority of the sportsmen were crack shots.

Of course all this is quite natural to a sporting people who have learned to like the smell of gunpowder, sulphur, and gas-tar, better than that of violets and thyme. But, putting the baby-poisoning, pigeon-shooting, and rabbit-shooting of to-day in comparison with the pleasures of the German Madonna, and her simple company ; and of Chaucer and his carolling company: and seeing that the present effect of peace upon earth, and well-pleasing in men, is that every nation now spends most of its income in machinery for shooting the best and bravest men, just when they were likely to have become of some use to their fathers and mothers, I put it to you, my friends all, calling you so, I suppose, for the last time, (unless you are

disposed for friendship with Herod instead of Barabbas,) whether it would not be more kind, and less expensive, to make the machinery a little smaller; and adapt it to spare opium now, and expenses of maintenance and education afterwards, (besides no end of diplomacy) by taking our sport in shooting babies instead of rabbits?

Believe me,

Faithfully yours,

J. RUSKIN.

